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AUTHOR Evans, Judith L.; Schaeffer, Sheldon
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INSTITUTION Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development, Haydenville, MA.
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ABSTRACT

This issue of the Coordinator's Notebook focuses on the quality of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) programs. The bulk of the issue is devoted to an article "Quality in ECCD: Everyone's Concern" (Judith Evans), which reviews the need for a definition of high quality in ECCD programs and discusses how diverse stakeholders define quality. This article also proposes a process of determining locally-relevant criteria for quality that reflects indigenous cultural values and aspects of child development that have been universally validated through cross-cultural research, and presents a series of program examples that define and specify indicators of quality. Also included in this issue are regional profiles of UNICEF-supported ECCD programs in South Asian, East Asian, and Pacific nations (Sheldon Schaeffer). Early Childhood Care and Development programs from Sri Lanka and Viet Nam are detailed. A "Network Notes" section includes letters to the editor, information on the activities of regional networks, international organizations, upcoming international meetings, available publications and videotapes, and a calendar of events. Contains 38 references. (KDFB)

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Quality in ECCD: Everyone's Concern

Judith L. Evans

Quality is an international buzz word, not only in early childhood services but in connection with every kind of product and service. Yet in its mantra-like repetition, the word is in danger of being rendered meaningless. It attracts widespread support—for who could not want 'good quality'—unless and until we have to say what we actually mean, at which point it becomes far more elusive.

Moss, 1994, pg. 1

Quality has become a key concern among those engaged in ECCD programming. There is a push from researchers and programme planners, and from practitioners and parents, to define the factors that constitute a high quality programme, to determine what constitutes "success" in a programme, and to identify those aspects of an intervention that make a difference in the development of young children. Policymakers and funding agencies are particularly interested in identifying indicators that can measure success to use as a basis for making investment decisions. Parents and practitioners want to see quality environmental and caregiving supports for young children, and often have a wide diversity of ideas about what that means in terms of programming. Addressing the issue of quality from many perspectives, the various stakeholders are all contributing to the search for a more or less universal definition of quality early childhood programming—if such a definition is possible.

In this article, we will review the need for a definition of quality early childhood interventions and programmes. We will look at sources of information about quality, and discuss how diverse stakeholders define quality. And, through a sample Workshop we will propose a process for determining locally-relevant

criteria of quality that reflect both indigenous cultural values and those aspects of child development that have been more universally validated through cross-cultural research. Through a series of *Examples* we also provide a sampling of diverse efforts, representing different perspectives, which define and specify indicators of quality in early childhood programming.

The Need for a Definition of Quality

There are a number of *stakholders* challenging the early childhood community to address the issue of quality service—from those directly involved in ECCD programmes as beneficiaries and implementers, to those who make decisions related to the availability and potential impact of such programmes. One of the primary reasons we are seeking quality is that research and experience has demonstrated the value of quality ECCD programmes. The known outcomes of quality programmes include:

- *for children and the primary school experience*: Children in quality early childhood programmes make a better adjustment to primary school; they perform better in school than those children without an ECCD experience; children are more likely to remain in school and less likely to need to repeat grades than those children without ECCD experiences. Children with quality early experiences have better self-esteem; they have a greater ability to learn and have greater problem-solving skills; and they view themselves as learners.
- *for the family*: Quality programmes can also have an impact on the family. They can free women from full-time child care so that they can earn more and/or tend to family enterprises; they free older siblings so they are able to attend school; and they increase parental knowledge which enhances their childrearing skills.
- *for the community*: ECCD programmes can have an important impact on the community as a whole and they are sometimes used as an *entry point* into the community to achieve other development goals—e.g. the upgrading of water and sanitation services, the introduction of health and social services, and the empowerment of the community to engage in other development activities.
- *for the society*: Research on ECCD programmes indicates that there are benefits to a society as a whole of quality interventions during the early years. This is evidenced in terms of productivity and children's eventual social contributions to society as adults.

Thus we know that quality programmes produce desirable outcomes. The challenge is to define quality and to ensure that the dimensions of quality guide the programme development process. As will become evident in the article, searching for universal standards of quality is fraught with difficulties. Nonetheless we need to engage in the process because:

1. We need to know if our investments in ECCD are worthwhile, and if so, we need to be able to tell others what we mean by a quality programme that is in line with the investment. Funders (governments, NGOs, bi-lateral agencies and foundations) want to be assured that their funds are supporting quality efforts. They are particularly interested in the issue of cost-effectiveness.

2. We need to have some criteria that we can use to define effective models, which can serve as templates or provide guidelines for others desiring to begin ECCD programmes. An understanding of quality within the programme would assist that process.

3. We need to understand what happens to successful programmes when they *go to scale*, that is, when they are replicated for the purpose of achieving greater coverage. When small-scale programmes are judged to be of high quality, there is interest in making the programme available to a greater number of people. One of the concerns in doing that is how to maintain quality in the process.

4. We need to know what is required in order to create an effective large-scale programme. With the advent of large-scale programmes being undertaken by governments, generally with substantial donor support, there are concerns about how to put such programmes into place in a way that will achieve and maintain quality provision.

5. We need to know how to work with governments to define their role in ECCD programmes. In many countries there is a move for greater decentralization of government. More and more the power that was once held centrally is being dispersed to regions, districts and even municipalities. In this shift, a primary question in relation to ECCD programming is, What is the role of government in support of ECCD? One of the answers consistently given is that the government should provide the standards so that quality can be maintained. Therefore, governments want to know what the standards should be.

6. We need to know if we are doing the best that we can be doing for young children and their families. This is the *bottom line* in ECCD programming.

To define quality, we seek information, wisdom and advice from a variety of sources. We seek it from researchers, we seek it from professionals, and we are influenced by global initiatives.

Contributions from the Academic and Research Community

Academics and researchers greatly influence the discussion of quality as they produce information and

data that provide a baseline in the definition of quality. This information comes from two main sources. The first is research that increases our understanding of how children grow and develop. The second is longitudinal research, designed to understand the impact of a range of interventions on that development, which continues to argue that the outcomes we desire of early childhood experiences can only be obtained through quality programmes.

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Early experiences are important in shaping the way the brain works.

■ An increased understanding of child growth and development

Almost daily there are new discoveries about the importance of the early years in terms of later growth and development. These would suggest that there are critical points in children's development where it is important to ensure that children are having the kinds of experiences that support their growth and development. For example, the field of molecular biology brings new understandings of the way the nervous system functions and the ways in which the brain develops, and the impact of the environment on that development. The report of the Carnegie Task Force on Meeting the Needs of Young Children (Carnegie, 1994) points out five areas where our understanding of the brain has been expanded.

First, the brain development taking place before age one is more rapid and extensive than previously realized. The months immediately after birth are critical in terms of brain maturation. During this time the number of synapses—the connections that allow learning to take place—increase twenty-fold. (pg. 7) Second, the development of the brain is much more vulnerable to environmental influence than suspected. Nutrition is the most obvious example, but the quality of interaction and a child's cumulative experience (health, nutrition, care and stimulation) during the first 18 months lead to developmental outcomes, which for children from poor environments may result in irreversible deficits. (pg. 8) Third, the influence of the early environment on brain development is long-lasting. Children's early exposure to good nutrition, toys and stimulating interaction with others has a positive impact on children's brain functions at age 15, as compared to peers who lacked this early input, and the effects appear to be cumulative. (pg. 8) Fourth, the environment affects not only the number of brain cells and the number of connections, but the ways in which they are 'wired'. The brain uses its experience with the world to refine the way it functions. Early experiences are important in shaping the way the brain works. (pg. 8) Fifth, there is evidence of the negative impact of stress during the early years on brain function. Children who experience extreme stress in their earliest years are at greater risk for developing a variety of cognitive, behavioral and emotional difficulties. (pg. 9) This research would suggest that there are some universals in terms of what constitutes a quality experience for young children, since the development of the brain is a biological rather than culturally-influenced phenomenon.

This is only a small example of the type of research being conducted on growth and development, all of which indicates the importance of the early years in terms of long-term developmental outcomes. Thus we are particularly concerned about the quality of children's experiences during the early years—the type of care provided, children's nutritional and health status, and the gestalt of the environment within which they live.

With our increasing knowledge about children's growth and development, there is an increasing desire to link the quality of programming to developmental outcomes.

The question thus becomes, what is the relationship between what is 'developmentally beneficial' for the child and outcomes? One answer to that question is provided by longitudinal research.

■ A longitudinal assessment of the importance of quality

A second academic push to focus on quality comes from longitudinal assessments of the impact of ECCD programmes. The most notable of these is the High/Scope Perry longitudinal study that has moni-

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Programmes of quality must be developmentally beneficial and appropriate for young children.

tored the experience of two groups of children since they were three years of age until their early adulthood at age 27. One group had a preschool experience and the other did not. In the latest publication on the results of the longitudinal study, the authors conclude: "Quality is essential to the effectiveness of preschool programmes, whether they address the critical problems of children and families living in poverty or the important child care needs of a broader population." (Schweinhart, et al., 1993, pg. 17)

Within a paper on quality developed by Schweinhart (1995) he outlined the following components of a quality programme:

1. The programme offers a validated child development curriculum.
2. The programme uses a validated child development assessment strategy.
3. The number of young children per teacher is low enough to enable staff to positively influence young children's development.
4. Staff are trained to know how to positively influence young children's development.
5. Staff receive systematic in-service training and supervisory support to positively influence young children's development.
6. Families are partners with teachers in positively influencing young children's development.
7. The programme meets child health and family needs.

(In Example 2 are two other listings of elements of quality programmes that have been derived from the High/Scope study.)

What the research would indicate is that programmes of quality must be *developmentally beneficial* or *developmentally appropriate* for young children. The question is, what does that mean in terms of programming? To begin to answer that question it is important to try to differentiate what might be universal in terms of children's development and what constitutes the cultural overlay. Woodhead (1996) in an attempt to define what might be universal in terms of children's needs, distinguishes between *basic* or *fundamental* needs and *socially constructed* needs. He would include as basic the needs for physical survival, psychological health, and those needs identifiable in the *drives* or *wants* of the child. (pg. 56) He also posits that it should be possible to have the basic needs agreed upon universally. The socially constructed needs, on the other hand, are associated with social adaptation, achieving goals, and acquiring desired skills and values. These are culturally relative and are viewed as being in the *best interests of the children*, and may have nothing to do with the child's *wants*.

From our understanding of what the research literature provides and in terms of programming experience over the past 25 years, we suggest that there are some universals that begin to define quality experiences for young children. In addition to physical safety, health and proper nutrition, children's psychosocial needs must be addressed in a quality programme. Psycho-social needs include the need for security and protection from physical danger, for interaction with a caring adult, love and affection. Children have a need to explore and discover, and

they need to experience success. These needs are derived from what we know about how children acquire a sense of self and how they learn (Donohue-Colletta, 1992). As noted by Myers (1996), "something that responds to these markers should be in all programmes. Any programme that does not try to respond to these needs will not be a quality programme." (pg. 3) He goes on to state: "at the same time, once defined, there are numerous ways to respond to these, determined by culture and context." (pg. 3–4) What will differ from culture to culture is the type of experiences that are provided for children in response to these needs.

We address the cultural relativity of quality later in the article. At this point we simply want to posit that there are some *markers* that are universal that should be included in any discussion of quality and that researchers, or what research has contributed to our understanding of children's growth and development, need to be a part of setting standards in any particular childcare environment.

Having noted that the *researcher* is important in a definition of quality, it is also important not to see research as sacrosanct. Research results need to be put into perspective. In relation to a definition of quality, Penn (1994) states, "arguments are rarely resolved by research since the research paradigm does not usually allow for the political, historical or economical context. Research is often highly specific and decontextualized, and located within a particular theoretical framework, daily practice is inevitably more complex." (pg. 10)

Thus research is only of value if the research paradigm includes or addresses the context within which the research is being undertaken. Further, research should state the premises from which it is carried out and make explicit the values imbedded in the research. If a programme accepts the same values that a particular research tradition embodies, then the results of that research will be relevant to the programme, even if it is not specifically linked to the programme. For example, if one of the cultural goals is for children who are independent, and a body of research suggests that independence is best achieved by giving children experiences to explore on their own, ask questions, etc., then it is possible to adapt the strategies identified by research to the goals in that context.

Contributions from Practitioners—Professionals and Non-professionals

Professionals. In addition to researchers seeking a definition of quality, among professionals involved in ECCD activities there is a concern about specifying quality practice. Here the pressure for quality may reflect the effects, once or twice removed, of research as it is translated into particular kinds of training and standards and action. It also reflects a trend toward professionalization of the field of ECCD. With a call for greater professional expertise comes a push for certain standards.

ECCD professionals are often seeking ways to evaluate their work in order to better understand the impact of current programming and also to determine ways to enhance their programmes. There is increasing recognition of the importance of monitoring children's progress in order to provide appropriate experiences for them. Within well-established programmes, whether it be Montessori or High/Scope, child evaluation is a key component. Therefore the need for instruments to evaluate children (and programmes) is pushing the creation of instruments which will help define quality.

While some would argue that the comparatively recent growth of interest in measuring quality in early childhood services has not been matched by a comparable growth in tools available for this purpose (Brophy and Statham, 1994, pg. 65), over the years ECCD professionals have been involved in the creation of a number of practical tools that can be used to evaluate children and facilities. There are a variety of well-known instruments that are often given as points of reference in the measurement of quality, some of which have been used in a variety of cultural settings. Two examples include the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) developed by Thelma Harms and Richard Clifford (1980), and Developmental Appropriate Practice (DAP), an approach articulated by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the largest ECCD professional organization in the USA.

The ECERS has been described by the authors as offering "a relatively short and efficient means of looking seriously at the quality of the [early years] environment" and as covering "the basic aspects of all early childhood facilities." (as cited by Brophy and Statham, 1994, pg. 65) The ECERS is intended to provide a picture of the environment within which an early childhood programme operates. This includes: the layout of space; the types of materials and experiences that are available to support fine and gross motor development, language development, self-help skills and social development; the organization of the day; the types of interactions that occur between adults and children; and what is provided for the adults in the setting. The ECERS contains seven main topic areas, organized into 37 individual scales, each of which can be measured on a seven-point rating scale, with 1 being inadequate and 7 being excellent. Each scale offers a description of appropriate observations at points 1, 3, 5, and 7. (See Example 5 for more detail.) Scores are made after 2–3 hour observation periods, supported by information provided by staff.

While the ECERS has been widely used in the

UNICEF 5569 Jeremy Hartley

In Bucharest, Romania, this early childhood programme encourages problem-solving.

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United States, its applicability in other contexts—even other Western countries—has been questioned. Brophy and Statham (1994) attempted to use the ECERS in an assessment of playgroups in the UK. They found the scale value-laden and inappropriate to some of the settings within which they were working. However, there was some value from having used the instrument. They noted:

> *Using the ECERS ... established the beginning of a theoretical and practical discussion about the relationship between on the one hand the (somewhat nebulous) notion of quality, and its containment within the discourse of 'experts' and on the other, diverse child care services and the communities they serve in contemporary multi-cultural societies.* (Brophy and Statham, 1994, pg. 72)

Thus it became a useful starting point in a *dialogue about what constitutes quality* for the population being served and how that interfaces with what experts view as quality care. This is an important point in relation to the thesis we would like to propose in this article, which is that *quality is defined through a process which includes a dialogue among the stakeholders involved in ECCD programming.*

DAP is the other instrument widely used in the USA, since it has been promoted by NAEYC. DAP is based on the assumption that there are elements of children's development that are universal, and that these can be used as a way of judging whether or not a programme is meeting the child's need. (Bredekamp, 1987) It supports a child-centred, play-based approach to early education, with a strong emphasis on individuality. Used cross-culturally (i.e. outside of the USA, and even within the country), the DAP approach has been found lacking because of its inability to take into consideration cultural differences. As summarized by Woodhead (1996), "even within the USA, Developmentally Appropriate Practice has been sharply challenged. It is insensitive to the cultural diversity in children's family experiences and parenting practices, and it risks resurrecting discredited judgement about deprived environments and the need for compensation." (pg. 62)

Any tool that is being developed to measure quality must be linked to the goals and actual service being provided. This can only happen if there is congruence between the values and beliefs which underpin the service and those that serve as the basis for the development of a measurement of quality. "To achieve this, an evaluative measure must state clearly its own values base, and express and recognize[s] and covers the objectives that are important to the service." (Brophy and Statham, 1994, pg. 73)

How the instruments currently being used to assess quality in programming need to be examined in terms of their cultural relativity, particularly in terms of their value base. The issue of values will be discussed at greater length later in the article, at this point it is only important to highlight the fact that there is increasing acknowledgment of the *subjectivity* of even the most *objective* instruments.

So-called "non-professionals". One of the issues within the field of ECCD is the fact that *experience* is often not seen as a valid source of knowledge about what constitutes quality in relation to programmes for young children. The ideas and contributions of those who have years of experience working with young children can add much to our understanding of what constitutes quality care. Yet the contributions of so-called non-professionals frequently get lost in a more academic research-based search for quality. However, there are many exciting and viable practices, interesting services, and grassroots successes that can help to shape our ideas about quality. Local innovations and perceived successes have begun to inform regional and national practice, but funds are rarely available to carry out the kinds of longitudinal research and validation required to identify the elements of popular programmes that constitute "quality". These programmes need to be examined more closely, and if they are used as models, funds need to be made available to evaluate them in more long-term, systematic ways.

Contributions from the International Initiatives

There is increasing interest in creating *universal* quality criteria, in line with other universals. Within recent years there have been a number of international movements that are pushing for universal standards in relation to a variety of dimensions of childhood. There is the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which defines children's basic rights. These rights have been agreed upon by the majority of the world's countries. This has set an international standard by which governments can be judged in terms of their support for children. Another international standard is the Education for All (EFA) initiative, which in the original conference in 1990 established the goal of education for all. At a follow-up meeting in 1993 in New Delhi, the theme was *Quality* Education for All. Thus, not only is everyone to be assured an education, but it must be of quality. While the CRC is quite specific in defining children's rights, those involved in the EFA effort have not been so definitive in identifying what a 'quality' education entails.

There are those who argue that there are some universal rights that must be a part of a quality programme. They posit that there is a common set of core values that should be used as the basis for defining quality. In particular, equality is a key. Joseph (et al., 1994) state:

> *One of these core and non-negotiable values is equality, which*

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we would define minimally as follows: All children must be treated equally as they grow (taking positive account of any barriers that impede their progress) and any factors that discriminate against them must be removed. (pg. 93)

They base this statement on the argument that equality is a fundamental human right and that the concept of human rights should lie at the heart of any definition of quality. They argue further that the Convention on the Rights of the Child, for example, can be used to "define a universal parameter of good practice" (pg. 94) *The Day Care and Educational Provision for Young Children* (1991) document issued by the Department of Health in the UK, also links children's rights and quality programmes. They assert that quality programmes begin with the rights of the child. They state:

Children have a right to an environment which facilitates their development. Children have the right to be cared for as part of a community which values the religious, racial, cultural and linguistic identity of the child. ... Children's sense of identity is a fundamental aspect of their development. ... Other examples of rights include freedom from discrimination such as racism or sexism and rights to cultural diversity. (para. 6.28 as quoted in Brophy and Statham, 1994, pg. 63)

Thus, there is an attempt to define the universal components of quality. The problem is that even basic human rights do not provide a solid footing in the definition of elements of a quality programme. As Woodhead (1996) points out:

Statements of children's rights and needs provide important markers for any debate about quality in early childhood programmes. But they are not unproblematic, fixed markers. They have to be interpreted at the level of practice as well as theory. ... They have to be interpreted in political, economic, social, religious and cultural context. At the same time they have to be interpreted in historical context, within individual communities as well as at regional and national level. (pg. 58)

Not only is it in the application of the principles to a situation that it is possible to see the "subjectivity" of principles, it is also demonstrated by the fact that principles change over time. "The international concept about children's needs and rights may be amended or improved, as new knowledge accumulates, global circumstances alter and social values change." (Woodhead, 1996, pg. 58) This does not mean that Woodhead would throw out internationally agreed-upon principles of children's rights. They serve a purpose. "Pragmatically, they define the outer boundaries of any debate about pathways to quality. They are essential constituents in the process of negotiating 'quality' in ways which are relative, but not arbitrary." (pg. 59)

Standards—What Is their Relationship to Quality?

When people begin to search for a way to describe or promote quality programming, they frequently turn to the identification of basic *standards*. For example, in an effort to ensure a basic level of quality in all licensed programmes, a government ministry will identify specific standards of preschool practice that must be met. The ministry will then commonly dictate the space, teacher-child ratios, and scheduling standards it feels are either minimally necessary or paramount. The thinking is that if *standards* of quality can be established in all programmes, then children's needs will effectively be met. However, there are several difficulties with trying to promote quality in ECCD programmes through the establishment of standards.

Standards Are Too Often Based on Western Contexts

As Woodhead (1996) notes: "Identifying basic standards is too often a euphemism for adopting the quality indicators that preoccupy programme managers in materially affluent, industrialized, urban societies (notably building standards, staff qualifications and ratios and material resources). These indicators originate from circumstances of economic affluence, professionalized employment patterns, combined with materialistic and technological values." (pg. 48)

Thus the ECCD standards that governments in developing countries are being shown have been derived from economic and historical contexts quite unlike those found in most Majority World countries. In striving to be "modern" some governments have taken on these standards, and programmes are asked to comply with them in order to be recognized. The example of Nigeria was described in Issue No. 17 of the *Coordinator's Notebook*, and it is summarized here. In 1987 the Federal Ministry of Education in Nigeria published *Guidelines on Pre-Primary Education*. These were the standards of provision that had to be met to achieve recognition by the government. The requirements in terms of facilities encompassed such things as spacious, well-ventilated rooms, with ample storage facilities and access to running water. Given these criteria the great majority of early childhood programmes could not be registered. This meant that the services went "underground", they operated without any supervision or the linkages to other resources that could have been provided if they were legitimate programmes. In the Nigerian case, through work with UNICEF, the standards were revised to more accurately reflect the realities of child care settings in that country. This allowed programmes to be recognized and supported.

The adoption of Western standards is not unique to Nigeria. It is a worldwide phenomenon. Woodhead (1996) summarizes the situation when he states: "Most of the world's children are attending programmes that fail to fulfill the basic standards that would be expected by programme planners. ... If their perceptions of basic standards were to be universally applied, the logical outcome would be to condemn the experience of the majority of the world's children." (pg. 46–47) Thus the adoption of Western standards is inappropriate and does not serve the purposes of establishing or maintaining a quality programme.

Standards as Static Measures of Quality

When you try to legislate and define quality by specifying standards, another difficulty emerges. An examination of the standards commonly adopted by governments reveals that the majority of the items included in these standards have to do with what can be called the *static* dimensions of ECCD programmes: the physical facilities, the amount of space, the placement of toilets, the access to water, the kind of furniture in the room, the ratio of teachers to children, etc. These could be classified as the *inputs* into the programme. And while at some point in time these inputs were derived from research demonstrating the relationship between these inputs and desired outcomes for children (in the USA and Europe), they have lost much of their meaning in their transplantation to other cultures. In the specification of standards there is seldom any mention of how they were derived and how they relate to outcomes. So the focus of the quality discussion becomes increasingly limited to what is being provided physically and structurally. As noted by Larner and Phillips (1994):

> *When professionals assess child care quality, their goal is typically to identify the features of child care settings that are associated with positive experiences and outcomes for children. Their concepts of quality are designed to be concrete, objective and quantifiable, so they can be applied fairly across a wide range of programmes. That interest leads professionals to focus on structural features of child care programmes, such as adult-child ratio, group size and caregiver qualifications that are often associated with safe, positive experiences for children.* (pg. 46)

There is little or no discussion of what happens in the setting relating to the *process* of education. Yet, the work that has been done to assess the long-term impact of ECCD programmes clearly points out that the kinds of *dynamic* experiences the child has in the setting—with materials, through activities, and through interactions with adults—are far more important in determining child outcomes than the *static* indicators. But since the *static* dimensions are easier to measure and assess, they generally become the focal point. As Penn (1994) notes, "... any regulatory model based solely on minimum standards rather than on principles and process has the effect that many providers, particularly in the private sector, equate meeting such standards with quality provision. Providers can claim that because they have met the regulatory requirements, they are offering a *quality* service." (1994, pg. 26)

The results of this are visible when one visits early childhood programmes in all parts of the world. The focus on the 'static' is reflected in the kinds of things that supervisors look for when they visit teachers—Is the equipment in good repair? Are the materials all there? Are all the forms filled out correctly? etc. Time is not allocated to observing the teacher interacting with the children nor to observing the children themselves, since these dimensions of a programme are not perceived as being important—they aren't among the standards. A singular focus on static standards can actually get in the way of quality programming.

Standards as Control

When governments see themselves as responsible for setting the standards—in both centralized and decentralized governments—they are hoping to be able to exercise some control over the kinds of ECCD experiences that children have. There is a generalized belief that the more details that can be specified, the greater the control over the quality of the programme. It is in this attempt to assure quality that in Guandong Province in China, the national curriculum for nurseries runs to 18 volumes, as a way of standardizing provision. (Penn, 1994, pg. 17) One might well question whether such detailed standards facilitate or discourage the implementation of quality services for children.

Standards as a Reflection of Economic Differences

One further difficulty in developing standards that are culturally appropriate for a particular community, is to determine which standards of care, resources, and facilities within that community (and country) to use. The issue is summarized well by Paul (1995):

> *The standard for services for the poor seems to be set in accordance with the standard of living of the poor. This is reflected in the physical space available for the creche, the facilities provided, the quality and quantity of equipment provided, the quality of the creche worker and the quality of the programme itself. The question is, should the creche offer a standard that is far superior to what the child is accustomed to in his/her home and community. For example, should the creche provide germ free drinking water for the children when the child's home cannot afford the fuel to boil the water supplied by the municipali-*

ty to make it germ free? ... Should the children be trained to use the creche toilet when the 500 families in the community perhaps have three public toilets for men and 3 for women? ... Can quality of the creche service be judged without reference to the quality of life of the community? ... The challenge [is] to make the creche programme a part of an integrated and holistic development of the community. (pg. 3)

The danger is that if standards are based on local conditions and local economy, then countries will end up with standards that are widely divergent from place to place within the country. If standards are set from a centralized source within the nation, it often leads to differentiation between 'first class' ECCD programmes and 'second class' efforts. In either case, the setting of standards does not fully address the question of how to provide quality services to young children.

How Do We Address the Issue of Quality?

Judgments have to be made, criteria have to be applied, standards have to be agreed. The point is that while there are multiple perspectives, this does not mean that quality itself is arbitrary. Identifying the criteria for quality in early childhood is not just a matter of whim or personal taste. Judgments of quality are the expression of complex systems of belief, knowledge and values, which relate to particular cultural, familial and institutional contexts and aspirations for childhood ... appraisal of context and perspectives within a particular setting is an all important part of the process of identifying quality—to counterbalance the tendency to impose so called 'universal' standards. (Woodhead, 1996, pg. 45)

As we mentioned on pages 2–3, ample research exists to demonstrate there is a baseline of universal needs that children have which must be addressed in any quality service for children. These include the need for safety, health supports, good nutrition, positive interactions with reliable adults, the opportunity to explore and exercise their bodies and minds, and love and affection. In addition, research suggests that a child's needs are synergistic—that the physical, intellectual, social and emotional experiences all interact to support (or fail to support) healthy child development. Thus a quality environment for children is one that supports the child's whole development. However, what it means to support the child's whole development is embedded within the culture, within the specific historical and economic context, within the goals and values of the people designing and providing the child's care. We have found, based on long experience, that the *process* of defining quality, when it includes all the stakeholders in a child's life, should in fact be the first step in assuring that quality services will exist. Thus in the following pages, we will discuss how diverse stakeholders may approach the question of defining quality, and what those definitions might mean in terms of practice, actual services provided to children, and outcomes for children's development.

How do we address the issue of quality? For us the process includes the following:

1. Articulate values.
2. Examine the children's cultures—quality is embedded in cultures.
3. Include all stakeholders in an active process.
4. Ground the discussion of quality in programme goals.
5. Treat quality definition as an ongoing process.

Articulate Values

The primary difficulty in defining universal standards of quality is that quality is relative, based on the values, beliefs and knowledge of those who are attempting to define quality. As Pence & Moss (1994) note, "quality in early childhood services is a constructed concept, subjective in nature and based on values, beliefs and interest, rather than an objective and universal reality." (pg. 172) This is true even when we allow *experts* to define quality, since among them there are disagreements as to a definition of quality. This fact was illustrated in an anecdote taken from the author's travel notes:

In a recent visit to a series of early childhood centres in the Philippines I was accompanied by professionals from the Department of Welfare and Social Development (DSWD). I was shown a variety of programmes, including those under the DSWD and those where the teacher had been trained by a local NGO. In the DSWD centres children were seated in neat rows at tables, facing the front where the teacher was giving a lesson. The shelves were full of colorful puzzles, games and toys, all safely stored behind clear plastic, tacked down to protect the shelves from dust. The plastic also protected the shelves from being accessed by either the teachers or the children. When we entered the room all the children stood and greeted us. The teacher then pulled their attention back to her and the lesson continued. This classroom was shown to me as a model of a 'quality' programme.

In a centre close by we walked into a room that was fairly chaotic in appearance, children were working in small groups with teacher-made materials and the noise-level was high. The teacher was hard to find since she was on the floor working with a group of children. The children paid little attention to our entrance. They glanced up and then continued their work. The professionals accompanying me believed this classroom to be of much lower quality than the first because of the lack of teacher control, the classroom's disorderliness and the children's apparent lack of respect for their elders. While I, from my professional vantage point, was chagrined by the teacher's dominating control and the lack of children's involvement in the first classroom, and delighted by what I saw in the latter classroom where children were actively engaged in the learning process. (Evans, 1996)

Thus, even among professionals there is bound to be very different sets of expectations in terms of what constitutes a quality programme, given different val-

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What do we want children to be when they grow up?

ues and beliefs. Now take the question of quality to a broader audience—parents, practitioners, policy-makers, funders—and the value bases for defining quality become even more diverse.

While quality is relative to one's position in time and space, Woodhead makes the point that quality is not 'arbitrary'. (1996, pg. 8) That is an extremely important point. If all we could say about quality was that it was based on beliefs and values and therefore it was relative to the situation, then we might just as well end the discussion because nothing more could be said to help us reach an understanding of quality. But given the fact that quality is not 'arbitrary' means that there is something behind people's definition of quality; it is based on dimensions which are possible to explore and take into consideration when addressing the issue. What are these dimensions that keep quality from being arbitrary?

As already noted, a definition of quality is based on values and beliefs. Those can be articulated. We don't make our values and beliefs explicit very often but we should, simply to know the kinds of assumptions we bring to a situation. A task you could do right now is to take out a pencil and paper and answer the following questions:

What is it that I want children to be when they grow up?

What values do I want them to have?

What do I want them to be able to do?

I believe that in order to achieve these things children need...

I believe that young children learn best when...

I believe that the role of adults in that process is to...

Therefore, for me a quality programme...

Undertaking such an exercise will help you begin to get a sense of the values 'lens' that you use when viewing an early childhood programme.

Examine the Children's Cultures: Quality Is Embedded in Cultures

Values and beliefs about quality can be personal, familial, communal and cultural. They can derive from experience, education, family or religious training, as well as from one's world view and practical considerations or limitations. Thus when we say that quality is embedded in cultures, and when we seek to discuss quality within a 'cultural paradigm', it is important to realize that there is more than one culture that needs to be taken into consideration. There are at least four kinds of culture that have an impact on the process. There are the local and family cultures within which the child is living. There is the culture of early childhood programmes as they exist in the world today. There is the emerging global culture. And there is the culture(s) of the future. Each of these has a 'claim'

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We believe in beginning with the child's own culture and building on it.

within the process of defining quality services for young children.

■ The child's culture of origin

We believe in beginning with the child's own culture and building on it. Programmes tend to be more fully accepted by parents and children if they are firmly grounded in local childrearing beliefs and practices (*Coordinators' Notebook*, Issue 16) In many cases this means building on two cultures, when for example a child might belong to a religious or ethnic minority within a community that has another set of dominant practices. For the past five years, there has been quite a bit of emphasis on building ECCD programmes within a cultural context, building on the strengths of families, and putting greater emphasis on the role of parents. This has led to the creation of several interesting ECCD programmes and models. For example, there is a home-based parent education programme in Sri Lanka that begins with the day-to-day tasks of adults and children, using these experiences to illustrate to parents what children learn through daily activities as well as helping parents see the importance of their role in the process. (See Programme Profiles, pg. 42) Another example of a programme created to meet local needs and support local values is the rotating child care programme in Nepal, in which women take turns caring for the children and the caregivers' tasks are then shared by the other women. In this latter case, it was important to the women that they not be asked to 'turn over' their responsibility for their children to strangers. By sharing the task, they were able to honor their sense of duty, but enable themselves to work outside the home as well. Both of these programmes were able to offer 'quality' services that reflected the local cultural values.

However, building on the local culture should not be seen as the panacea in early childhood programming. It is not always an easy task to address quality issues through a cultural paradigm. As stated by Gertsch (1995), "The cultural paradigm strikes me as a double-edged sword, potentially able to reveal some new insights but equally able to obscure issues or lead in problematic directions." (pg. 3) She then goes on to discuss what some of the problematic directions might be. She states:

> *While much social action including early childhood programmes makes claims to being culturally appropriate, culture is also something that should be looked at critically. We may encourage children to grow up with a sense of continuity with their cultural history and yet what are the patterns we would choose to alter to better equip children for change? ... While trying to promote cultural relevance we should also be paying attention to the bridges that connect a culture to other realities, present and future.* (pg. 7)

In the development of culturally-based programmes there is a weighing of values, a sharing of alternatives. We would suggest that the starting point may be to begin with the children's culture(s) of origin, but it may be necessary to build from there, taking into account national, global and developmental realities which may not be reflected in traditional local practice. Myers (1996) suggests that in this changing and multi-faceted world "a goal would be to provide children with *roots* in their own culture and *wings* to take them on to the new and unknown."

■ The culture of early childhood programming

One of the sources of 'new and unknown' experience comes from the culture of ECCD programming itself. As diverse efforts and experiments have been carried out around the planet, practitioners and ECCD specialists have identified certain practices and values which can also contribute to the creation of quality services for young children. There are some models of child care and education which have been validated by longitudinal research, there are others that offer insights into the relationship between inputs and outcomes. This 'culture' of ECCD means that a country, region or local community setting out to create a high quality programme for its children does not necessarily need to start from scratch.

There are several principles of programming wisdom which a review of diverse ECCD efforts will yield:

- that programmes need to be based on goals,
- that goals need to be linked to practices and organizational strategies,
- that practices should reflect what is known about children's development and should be sensitive to the realities in the children's lives,
- that staff or caregivers need to understand the goals, practices and children's development in order to provide consistent, responsive care,
- that the care providers need support from the community around them if they are to be able to respond to children's needs.

These principles, however, need to be interpreted and defined in terms of the local culture and conditions. What happens all too often, is that rather than drawing *principles* and *lessons learned* from the culture of ECCD, people seeking to define quality in terms of accumulated wisdom get overly focussed on the details and forms of successful ventures in other places. This is most evident in the tendency to think that preschool is the 'best' or 'primary' model for early childhood programming. This prejudice in favor of the preschool, with its often expensive equipment and facilities, can deflect developing (and developed) countries from addressing the question of quality care provision for all their children. If a government cannot even afford to provide primary education for all its children, the thinking goes, then how is it to be able to add pre-schooling?

The culture of ECCD offers many alternative models and experiences about how to provide quality care for young children that include lessons learned in centre-based programmes but are not limited to a centre-based approach. Yet this preschool model still predominates in all parts of the world.

The key is for programme planners to understand both the benefits and the shortcomings of the *centre-based preschool* model. They may need help in seeing the alternative models—whether they be community-based and financed programmes, family day care, full-day child care, parent education—as equally valid options. Parents too, tend to believe that preschools are *higher quality* programmes than other models. Unfortunately it is generally the 'static' dimensions that have an appeal—the physical structure and the materials that are most evident to an observer. In building on the culture of ECCD it is important to articulate and take into account the greater importance of the 'dynamic' dimensions—the quality of interactions, the understanding of how children learn, the ways that scheduling, tasks, and materials can be used to support children's development—that can be offered in a wide variety of settings.

■ The global culture

Communities and ethnic groups no longer operate in isolated cocoons. They are influenced and profoundly affected by the cultures that surround them. They are subject to the economic realities of the country and region, they are exposed to the stresses and gifts of the 'modern' technologically-based culture. They are affected by movements of people and resources that often require new skills of them and new childrearing techniques as well. Thus the definition of quality programming includes an element of helping children to respond to, adapt to, prepare for, and take their place in a larger global culture.

An example of this influence of the larger culture on the definition of quality programming for young children arose in Kenya, where young Muslim children on the coast were found to be increasingly marginalized economically and socially. Their religious training and the local school structures were in conflict. From the age of 3, the young Muslim children began their religious training (in the Koran). By the time their Koranic training was completed, they were too old to enter the secular schools, which had limited places and reserved these places for 5–6 year-olds. This meant that Muslim children were systematically growing up 'illiterate' in secular terms. Clearly, the values about what constituted quality education for these young Muslims were impacted by the global culture as well as their local culture-of-origin.

In recent years, global initiatives such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Education for All initiative have spelled out certain expectations the global community holds for all children. In addition, some countries have articulated Early Childhood Policies and Basic Education goals for their children. Where these exist, programmers need to take them into account, in order to understand the opportunities, constraints, and obligations they impose.

One key influence on early childhood programming (and the definitions about what constitutes quality early care) is the formal primary school. That is the

immediate future for most children who are served by early childhood programmes. For many decision-makers and caregivers, an indication of the quality of the ECCD programme is how well children do in the primary school—school readiness becomes the key measure of quality. The importance of this should not be negated. While many of us working in ECCD caution that shaping early experiences to the formal school expectations is not the optimum way to foster children's ability to learn, self-esteem, feelings of competence, etc., the bottom line for many is that children need to get into school, do well there and stay in school, hopefully through the primary years. Thus an ECCD programme's ability to prepare children for school is generally included in any assessment of its quality.

■ The culture(s) of the future

One thing we know that children of the future will need is the ability to respond to new demands. The world of today is not the world of ten years ago, and even less so the world of fifty years ago. With the rapid pace of change it is hard to imagine the challenges to be faced by the children of today as they become adults. The changes in technology, media and transportation bring the cultures of the world face to face with one another in ways not previously possible. This has brought better health to some parts of the world; it has led to the breakdown of traditional cultures in other parts of the world. What we want for children in the future will determine our goals for ECCD programmes. These, in turn, will play a part in the way we define quality programmes today.

Include All Stakeholders in an Active Process

Who are the stakeholders? Who are the potential beneficiaries and/or supporters of early childhood programmes? These include the child, the parent, the caregiver/teacher/provider, the organization that is implementing the programme (including 'experts'), those who are funding the efforts, and governments (bureaucrats and politicians). Each of these individuals and groups has a view on what an early childhood programme should provide and thus they have ideas about what constitutes a quality programme.

In discussing quality these various stakeholders need to be a part of the process. But it is not enough to say that they should be part of the process. It needs to be clear what the nature of their participation will be, taking into account personal and positional power relationships. The underlying value should be the promotion of mutual respect.

It is important to recognize the extent of each person's involvement. When people are asked to participate, are they included in the effort in full partnership with all the others, or are they expected to simply 'rubber-stamp' the work of others? It is best if expectations are clear from the beginning so that people can evaluate their potential role in the process.

What follows is a discussion of the possible perspectives on quality that would be *brought to the table* if one were to take into account the point of view of various stakeholders.

■ The child

One group of stakeholders in ECCD services is the children themselves. Taking into consideration the child's point of view is what Katz (1993) refers to as the 'bottom-up perspective on quality'. She argues that the children's experience of a programme is a determinant of the programme's effects. Given this, we need to know what it feels like to be a child in a given environment. Those looking at the programme should try to answer some of the following questions from the

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What is the child's experience within a given environment?

child's point of view:

Do I usually feel welcomed rather than captured?

Do I feel like I belong or am I just one of the crowd? Does the teacher know my name?

Do I usually feel accepted, understood and protected rather than scolded or neglected by the adults?

Am I usually accepted rather than isolated or rejected by the majority of my peers?

Am I usually addressed seriously and respectfully, rather than as someone who is 'cute'?

Do I find the activities engaging, absorbing and challenging?

Do I find most of the experiences meaningful, rather than boring?

Am I usually glad to be here, rather than eager to leave?

As Katz notes, each question implies a criteria of quality based on what is known about significant influences on children's long-term growth, development and learning. (pg. 1) These questions come from a value and belief base that puts emphasis on children's development of self-esteem and competence and on children being active learners in an environment designed to support their overall development.

Let's imagine for a moment that the child came from a very different culture where the collective was emphasized over the individual. Some of the questions that a child in that environment might be asked to answer would be:

Am I able to do my work without attracting the teacher's attention?

Am I able to contribute to the group in such a way that my contribution will not be singled out?

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Are my actions consistent with what is expected of me by my elders?

It is not always necessary to imagine how children would answer questions about their experience. They can be asked directly. This was done in Denmark (Langsted, 1994), where through interviews, five-year-old children were asked to make an assessment of quality within the services provided. The study showed that children had a clear understanding of what was provided and by whom and they had opinions about the value of a variety of activities. One of the things being assessed was the extent to which children were able to handle differences between home and school. This had largely to do with expectations in terms of children's behavior. Langsted (1994) notes:

When we ask five-year-olds themselves about the differences between home and centre (differences in terms of the degree of self-determination and the rules applying in each social environment), it appears that children are perfectly capable of coping with such differences. They might think that the differences are strange and that certain rules should be changed. But they accept virtually all the differences and many children show that they understand the reasons for the differences that apply. (pg. 41)

He goes on to state that it is not accidental that children are able to make these differentiations. "The ability of children to bring coherence to a world of differences depends on the presence of professional staff with the ability to guide and support children's relationships with each other and the integration of each child's different worlds into a single entity." (pg. 41) The match between school and home expectations is an even greater issue for many Majority World ECCD programmes. It suggests that teachers/caregivers in those settings might benefit from training or support in learning how to guide children in the integration of their diverse worlds.

The parent

Parents are another set of stakeholders. While in some instances parents do not appear to have a choice—i.e. there is only one service available in the area—they do have concerns about what their child is experiencing. In essence most parents are concerned with four things:

1. Is the place safe and pleasant? Parents are not necessarily aware of the variety of curricula that can be provided through ECCD programmes. Parents are more likely to be concerned with minimizing the possible harm that could be done in a setting than with maximizing the child's developmental experience. (Larner & Phillips, 1994, pg. 47)

2. Does it 'fit' with family needs? For example, is the early childhood programme offered at a time and place that allows the family to 'work it into the schedule' in a realistic way. One alternative that has been offered in some countries is employer-sponsored child care, at the place of employment. While intuitively this would appear to make sense—the child is nearby and the hours can match the hours of a parent's work—in fact, this alternative is not always taken up by parents. Parents who have to travel by public transport and have to travel a long time to arrive at their place of work do not want the hassle of having to transport the child to work with them. Further, parents of children under 3 prefer to have them in more home-like situations, e.g. with a relative, or a neighbor, or in a family day care home. Thus employer-sponsored child care is not always a good 'fit' with family needs.

Other questions related to fit include: Is the programme affordable? Is the service offered by someone I can trust?

In essence, "the critical difference between parent and professional perspectives on child care is that parents are seeking child care arrangements that will meet the needs of their own child and family; they bear no broader responsibility for the child care field. They need only find one arrangement, but their stake in the quality of that arrangement is immense." (Larner & Phillips, 1994, pg. 46)

3. What will the child experience in terms of cultural support? Will the child's culture be respected? Are the values and beliefs of the ECCD programme consistent with those of the family? If not, is the staff willing to work with parents to integrate home and the ECCD programme?

4. Will the programme prepare my child for school? This is perhaps the question of greatest import to many parents in Majority World countries, where ECCD programmes for preschool aged children are seen as the entry point into primary school. This is particularly important in places where there is competition for entrance into primary school. In countries like Kenya where there are a limited number of places in Primary I, attendance in a preschool programme becomes one way of assuring entrance into primary school. Even when there are adequate places in primary school, the preschool is perceived by parents as making children *ready* for school. In reporting on the results of a study of parent perceptions of quality in India, Paul (1995) notes:

Standards are related to the expectations of the community. For example, the majority of mothers expect the worker to 'teach' the children the alphabets, rhymes, reading, writing and arithmetic and prepare them for admission to the school. The efficiency of the creche worker is judged by the parents according to what the child is able to read, write and recite. They do not attach importance to play which is often considered a waste of time. This has an influence on the programme planning by the creche worker. These realities cannot be overlooked while adudging [sic] the quality of the programme. (pg. 3)

The parent perspective on quality is summarized by

Larner & Phillips (1994) when they say, "Parents research for arrangements they trust and are often reassured by continuities between home and caregivers. At the same time parents want the advantages of professional care if it means early childhood education, reliability, a healthy and safe environment, nutritious meals, kindness, affection and fairness." (pg. 57) To this should be added the high value placed on preparation for formal schooling in some countries.

In Katz's model, parents (and staff) provide the 'outside-inside' perspective on quality. Katz provides a list of questions that should be answered by both parents and staff to determine if the programme is of high quality.

Are my relationships with staff (or parents)

- primarily respectful, rather than patronizing or controlling?
- accepting, open, inclusive, and tolerant, rather than rejecting, blaming, or prejudiced?
- marked by contacts that are ongoing and frequent, rather than rare and distant?

Are my preferences for the goals and values for the children treated with respect?

This last question is frequently the area where there are significant differences between parents and those providing ECCD programmes.

There is also sometimes a discrepancy between what parents say they want and how they act in relation to their child. For example, in a study conducted in Kenya, one of the issues was that caregivers' perspective on quality and what they saw as necessary to attain quality was not necessarily reflected in their actions. This was attributed to the constraints of "time and resources, knowledge and resourcefulness." (Keoch, 1995, pg. 3) The study undertaken in Kenya also looked at how the parents, caregivers or service providers interpreted the effect of their practices, their awareness of how the practice might affect the child's development and their willingness to assume responsibility for child care decisions and practices. From the results Keoch concluded:

> *Caregivers and service providers rarely consider the numerous possible effects of their actions. For example, mothers who give the male child part of the father's protein foods when he is away but not when he is present are communicating cultural values and hierarchial family relationships. Do they believe those values and relationships will be helpful and relevant for the future development of their children? The parents who rarely talked to or with their children during time of famine were discouraging communication from the children about their hunger, but were they aware of the effects of low linguistic interaction on the children's language development? Are the caregivers who told their children many stories about witchcraft, devils, 'Mageni' (ghosts) and induced fear in the young children to protect them from perceived danger within the communities aware of any impact of these practices on the socio-emotional development of children? Are those who discouraged playfulness and exploration of young children aware of possible implications for their later learning?* (Keoch, 1995, pg. 4)

Thus, sometimes what parents do is not likely to get them the outcomes they say they desire. This is also true for the next group of stakeholders, those who work with young children.

■ The practitioner—provider/caregiver/teacher

This group of stakeholders refers to all those who work directly with children, regardless of the setting. In the Katz model, caregivers provide the 'inside' perspective on quality. She argues that there are three sets of relationships that are important here: colleague relationships, practitioner-parent relationships (assessed through the questions asked above), and practitioner/manager/sponsor relationships.

In terms of colleague relationships the questions that could be asked include: On the whole, are my relationships with colleagues: supportive rather than contentious? cooperative rather than competitive? accepting rather than antagonistic or hostile? and respectful rather than controlling? (pg. 2) The reason that relationships among caregivers are important is that practitioners cannot create a supportive environment for children unless the environment is also positive for the adults. As Katz notes, "a good quality programme is one in which children and adults find the quality of their lives together satisfying." (pg. 2)

Practitioner/manager/sponsor relationships have to do with the nature of the relationship between caregivers and those to whom they are responsible. In general caregivers treat children the way they are treated. Some questions caregivers/teachers might ask would be:

> *Are working conditions adequate to encourage me to enhance my knowledge, skills and career commitment?*
>
> *Am I usually treated with respect and understanding?*

Unfortunately in the Majority World the most likely response to these two questions would be, "No". The work conditions are unstable, those providing care and education in ECCD programmes are underpaid and have low status within the society. These all have an impact on the caregiver's view of her own worth and what she sees as her role within the programme. In the India experience, "The creche worker who is at the end of the actual service delivery, also influences quality by her perceptions of her role in ECD—whether she considers herself merely as responsible for maintaining the service or whether she conceives her role as that of a change agent in the community." (Paul, 1995, pg. 3) Thus the caregiver is an important component in the quality equation.

■ The organization/agency/institution

The organization that is providing the ECCD programme provides yet another perspective on quality. One important aspect of their assessment of quality

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Are working conditions adequate to encourage me to enhance my knowledge, skills, and career commitment?

has to do with their perceived role. Again, the India experience would suggest:

> *The quality of the programme will be influenced by the vision that the NGOs have for the poor whether they believe in a welfare model or developmental model of intervention—whether they believe in doling out some services or in empowering the poor—whether they think that the poor should be grateful for what they receive or that the poor have the right for quality services such as the rich.* (Paul, 1995, pg. 3)

Based on an NGO's perspective on its role, the NGO will have different criteria for quality within the programme. If the NGO approaches its role from a 'welfare' perspective then quality indicators are likely to include such things as:

Input	*X number of bags of food were delivered*
Outcome	*X number of families received and continue to receive services*

A more 'developmental' orientation would lead to indicators such as:

Input	*Training of workers and trainers* *Development of on-going systems for supervision* *Development of evaluation mechanisms*
Outcome	*The community has taken on responsibility for maintaining the ECCD programme* *We are no longer needed in the community since they are organized to meet their own needs*

■ Researchers & experts

Those involved in research on children's development and those who have conducted longitudinal evaluations of ECCD programmes are also significant stakeholders in the definition of quality. As was noted earlier, the data generated by this group provides leads as to what can be considered universals in terms of quality indicators.

In addition, including researchers as members of a planning team is a good strategy for assuring that programme goals, measurement devices and processes are integrated. As Myers (1995) suggests:

> *Participatory research can be designed to include parents, teachers, supervisors, programme planners and policymakers. Since each of these groups has much to contribute to our understanding of young children and the experiences which support their growth, it makes sense for ECCD researchers to draw on them in their research projects. Similarly, it makes sense for researchers to reach out in a myriad of ways to (and to be sought out by) these influential people to make sure that the interconnections between research, policy and programming are strong and vital.* (p. 22)

■ Government—bureaucrats and politicians

Within government there are at least two types of stakeholders. There are those who are there to assure and maintain quality—the bureaucrats—and those who have a more public role—the politicians.

Bureaucrats tend to be concerned with maintaining standards, maintaining control, and in many cases, maintaining the status quo. In a project in Scotland where a staff person was attempting to bring about change, her perception was that "the notion of quality within the education department was implicitly tied to the observance and continuance of existing educational traditions." (Penn, 1994, pg. 14). She went on to say that "obedience was a virtue and being unno-

ticed was a sign of doing your job well." (pg. 16) Needless to say, this was quite frustrating for someone who was trying to bring about a change in the system. As a result, in terms of assessing her own accomplishments, one of her "yardsticks of quality became ability to play the system, [and] the wit which people showed to deal with and circumvent these absurd procedures." (pg. 15)

Since bureaucrats often have the role of maintaining the system, and often feel great pressures for accountability, there can be a significant difference between what the bureaucrat sees as important in a programme and what those being served by the programme would see as indicators of quality. Pence (1992), working with the Meadow Lake Tribal Council in Saskatchewan Canada, made the following observation: "For the bureaucrat in charge of regulations, measurability itself is a key issue, while for an Elder in a Native community what may be of greatest concern is the less tangible and less measurable evidence of relationship, and the survival of language and culture." (pg. 6)

Politicians are the other group of government people who may well have a stake in ECCD programme quality. To them indicators of quality need to be something that can be seen in the short-term (since their life in politics may be short-term) and something which gets people's attention. A good example is the impact that the High/Scope Perry Preschool Study had on policy in the USA. Early childhood care and development had been promoted actively by practitioners for decades. Those who taught young children were very much aware of the value of the experience for the child. Educational psychologists were also advocates of attention to children's developmental needs during the early years. But neither the practitioners nor the theorists were able to command national or international attention. What finally made a difference was being able to discuss the benefits of quality early childhood programming in terms of cost savings and rate of return on investment. "Over the lifetimes of the participants, the preschool programme returns to the public an estimated $7.16 for every dollar invested." (Schweinhart, et al. 1993, pg. xviii) This pronouncement captured the attention of politicians and policymakers. A key indicator of programme quality for them was return on investment.

One of the reasons that it is important to be inclusive of politicians in the process of defining quality is that ultimately, if ECCD programmes are to be sustained, there needs to be a national policy framework that provides support to young children and their families. This does not mean that it is solely the responsibility of the government to provide ECCD programmes, but it does mean that there needs to be policy in place that allows government, NGOs, private enterprise, as well as donor and funding agencies, to work together to provide appropriate support systems.

Thus, it is important to have an understanding of what bureaucrats and politicians see as elements of quality and to address this in developing quality indicators.

■ Funders

Funders are concerned with both the inputs and the outputs in programmes and often judge quality by a comparison of inputs with outputs. In general, funders determine if it is a quality programme when it gives them the outcomes they expected, within a reasonable cost.

One implication of this is that it would be useful to include an identification of inputs and expected gains in any process to define quality. It is valuable to all stakeholders to think through their values and to carry their ideas through to a relatively concrete form. In the next section we offer a brief discussion of the process for linking programme goals to inputs, and inputs to possible outcomes, and within the Sample Workshop that follows, the topic is explored a bit further.

In sum, there are many stakeholders in ECCD—from those who receive the services, to those who develop them, to those who fund and mandate their implementation. Nonetheless, the *experts* are generally the only ones being called upon to define quality. The reality is that all the stakeholders need to be involved in the process of determining how quality should be defined.

Ground the Discussion of Quality in Programme Goals

Frequently goals are only discussed when a programme gets started. Those planning the programme state some goals in general terms (i.e. to promote children's cognitive development) without linking them to specific activities within the programme. Yet research has demonstrated that quality programmes are those which are designed to meet programme goals. Why would this be true? Because the process of articulating goals, and understanding them in concrete terms, helps practitioners, families and funders to all understand what the programme is attempting to accomplish and how it proposes to go about it. Setting clear goals allows programme planners to bring their thinking and actions into clearer focus.

Quality is often treated with the same vague attention. The dimensions of a quality programme are frequently defined without reference to either programme goals or to day-to-day realities of the programme. Yet we would argue that defining quality is not an empty exercise. There should be a clear link between programme goals, programme activities, and the indicators that determine whether a programme is

a quality one. For example (we will begin with a simple one), if one of the goals is to promote children's gross motor development, one of the activities could be outdoor play time. A quality indicator related to the goal might be whether there is outdoor space where it is safe for children to run and play.

Another (more complex) example would be to set the following programme goal: to develop children's abilities to solve problems. Activities within the programme that could help foster this would include time for children:

- to work with materials on their own, and/or with others;
- to create solutions to problems (e.g. building a 'bridge' between two towers, figuring out how to include another child in a fantasy play, figuring out how to share among all the children food that was brought by some of the children).

The indicators of quality associated with this goal would include:

- time for children to work on their own or in small groups with others;
- materials that children could access themselves; and
- adults who facilitate the problem-solving, but do not take over. An adult who presents a 'problem' and dictates the answer is not going to produce children who are able to solve problems for themselves.

If the programme goal is to produce a creative thinker, then children need time to be creative, and the indicator of quality would be if such time was structured into the daily routine. In other words, programme goals and quality indicators are linked; they need to be looked at and developed together.

What is the process for defining goals? In the ideal situation, "Defining goals may suggest an open, democratic and orderly process in which values, beliefs, interests and needs are recognized, explicitly articulated, then systematically discussed and considered; all stakeholders receive due consideration and exercise influence appropriate to the size of their stake; and decisions are reached by mutual agreement and consensus." (Moss, 1994, Pg. 4)

There are few instances in which the ideal goal-setting process occurs. The reality is that goal setting is generally done by those involved in one way or another in implementing the programme and it does not include the beneficiaries. Goals are established by either programme planners, funders, politicians or NGOs, based on their interpretation of needs. Yet goals will differ, depending on the perspective of the individuals involved in defining the goals and their relationship to the programme. If goals differ, then criteria for quality will necessarily differ.

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If a programme goal is to help children develop the ability to solve problems, then time needs to be built into the schedule for children to work with materials on their own and with others.

Treat Quality Definition as an Ongoing Process

As has been noted, quality is based on values and beliefs, and it involves a variety of stakeholders. It is not something fixed in time; it is a function of the history of ECCD provision as well as local experience; it is influenced by current developments and an anticipation of the future. Thus defining quality is necessarily a continuous process which takes into account new ideas and changing circumstances. A definition of a quality programme developed twenty years ago would not suffice today. We know more about how children develop. We have had a considerable amount of experience working with young children and their families. And we have had enough time to see the long-term impact of our actions. That has changed our definition of quality. And since research and programming experience continue, the process of defining quality will continue.

A good example of how the definition of quality evolves is presented in Example 2 where the elements of quality as defined by Schweinhart (et al.) are presented. Within that example there are 2 different lists of elements that contribute to quality. One was developed in 1981 and the other in 1993. (A third set, presented in 1995, is included on page 4 of this article.) While there are overlaps across the three definitions of quality, the lists are not the same. They reflect additional research on the topic; they reflect an expanded understanding of some of the issues involved in ECCD programming; and they reflect the fact that all three pieces were written for different audiences. For example the *Keys* listing was provided in 1981 for teachers and administrators in the USA. The 1993 listing is geared more toward an academic audience, and the 1995 definition of quality was presented in a paper commissioned by the World Bank. Thus even within only one organization the definition of quality has been a continuous process.

In sum, as Moss (1994) notes:

> *Quality is never an objective reality, to be finally discovered and pinned down by experts. It is inherently subjective and relative, based on values and beliefs, that may not only vary among and within societies, but will undoubtedly vary over time. ... Any definition of quality, therefore, is to an extent transitory (since) understanding quality and arriving at quality indicators is a dynamic and continuous process of reconciling the emphases of different interest groups.* (pg. 5)

In light of this, it is our contention that the value of defining quality is in the effects the process has on those who participate in it. The exercise and process of defining quality needs as much emphasis as the specific indicators you identify.

How Do We Go About Defining Quality Indicators for Our Programme?

Given that quality is value-based, relative and a process rather than a fixed product, how do you go about defining quality? The argument has been made that a process has to be undertaken which includes the various stakeholders. Pence and Moss (1994) suggest an 'inclusionary paradigm'. They describe the process as follows:

> *The challenge is to develop a new paradigm for defining quality based on participation by a broad range of stakeholders, and recognition of values, beliefs and interests underpinning definitions. Within this alternative paradigm, the roles, processes, principles typically found within the exclusionary paradigm are transformed: limited participation is replaced by broad access to the process of definition, power concentration gives way to power distribution, few voices make way for many, an assumption of rational objectivity is challenged by recognition of the essential subjectivity of the process and the role of values, beliefs and interests, the search for quality universals becomes the exchange of quality perspectives leading to definitions specific to a particular spatial and temporal context and capable of evolving through a dynamic and continuous process.* (pgs. 172–173)

Such an inclusionary paradigm would "not attempt to emulate the quality standards treasured by affluent nations, but instead offers legitimacy for tapping locally available human and material resources for child development in ways that are ecologically sustainable and consistent with local aspirations." (Woodhead, 1996, pg. 49)

The question is, where do you start with an inclusionary model? Our response: you need to start with the community that is to be served. And as Pence and Moss (1994) point out, the first thing that you need to determine is whether or not an inclusionary process is "valued and wanted" by the community. If the kind of process that is suggested in an inclusionary model is not a part of the culture, then you will have only limited success. In this case, it is important to include as many of the other stakeholders as possible in the process, even if they can be included only for a limited time, given other demands.

It is also important to remember that the process is not easy. As noted by Moss (1994) "defining quality is ... a political process. It involves interplay, negotiation and possible conflict between, and sometimes among, those stakeholder groups who are included and who may have different perspectives about objectives and priorities arising from different values and beliefs, interests and needs. The final result will be determined as much by the exercise of power and influence as by other considerations." (pg. 5) Nonetheless, it is impor-

tant to engage in the process.

To work toward a definition of quality it is possible to draw on any number of participatory techniques to allow for the inclusion of a variety of stakeholders and for the development of a process that both serves immediate needs and can be continued. The aim of the process is to help stimulate people to define quality for themselves in as many ways as possible, and then to derive a shared or common definition of quality—based on programme goals—linked to appropriate indicators. The process could be set in motion through an initial workshop. A possible design for that workshop follows.

Workshop on Quality

1. *Choose who would participate in the workshop.* In making the choice, there should be an awareness of the need to include a *variety of stakeholders*, people with different skills, experience and points of view. It might be useful to have educators, health people, anthropologists, and sociologists as a part of the team, in addition to parents and community members, practitioners, government officials, researchers and funders.

2. *Clarify the goals of the workshop.* People should be given an opportunity to share what they understand to be the outcomes of the workshop. That way people do not have false expectations in terms of what the workshop is able to provide. One way to clarify goals is to first have participants sit quietly and write down for themselves their own goals for the workshop. (If there are people there without writing skills, they can either draw something that reminds them of what it is they want to say, or simply remember it.) The second step would be for participants to share their expectations within a small group (i.e. with three or four other people). As they share their ideas, others in the group can ask questions to help clarify expectations. The group would then try to pool their expectations and make a presentation of this to the larger group. As each group reports, again there would be an opportunity for others to ask questions for clarification. At the end of the reporting session, the group should work toward consensus on what is to be accomplished in the workshop.

An example of appropriate goals for such a workshop might be:

To identify what a quality programme means to me.

To come to some agreement on how we will define quality for this programme.

To determine what we will use as indicators of quality.

To determine what kinds of inputs we require.

To define the kinds of activities and experiences that we think should be included in the programme to achieve quality and thus our goals.

It is important to note that these goals cannot be achieved in a *single sitting*. Work can be done in relation to each of these goals in an initial workshop, but each of the pieces must be revisited over and over again as there is additional experience brought to the topic.

3. *Begin with a personal definition of quality.* What does quality mean to me?

Earlier in the article we suggested a set of questions that could be asked as people think about what quality means to them. These were:

What is it that I want children to be when they grow up?

What values do I want them to have?

What do I want them to be able to do?

I believe that in order to achieve these things children need

I believe that young children learn best when

I believe that the role of adults in that process is to

Therefore, for me a quality programme

For the workshop, it would be useful if people first answer these questions for themselves before sharing the answers with the larger group. Once recorded personally, the answers to the questions could be shared in small groups and then in the larger group. Since there are a number of questions and a reporting on all of them could be quite extensive, begin with reporting only on *What is it that I want children to be when they grow up?* While this discussion begins with what we ultimately want children to be like, it works back to the question of what that means in terms of children's earliest experiences, since the early experiences have such an impact on long-term outcomes.

4. *Work Toward a Group Definition of Quality.* Once the group has determined the outcomes for children and adults that are desirable, the next question to ask is, what is the association between those outcomes and what actually happens within a quality programme? Within the workshop you could then have the group look at their responses to the statement, *Therefore for me a quality programme . . .* Again, the group's response to this question should be recorded.

Where possible, linkages should be made between the desired outcomes of ECCD programmes, and what people see as the components and/or activities of a quality programme. For example, if one of the outcomes of a quality programme is children who have good self-esteem, then there should be things going on within the programme that promote that. At a very basic level, the kinds of questions asked from the point of view of children on page 15 are appropriate here. For example, does the caregiver know the child's name?

Where there is no linkage between what people see as components of a quality programme and desired outcomes, the item should be discussed to ascertain if it in fact is a good indicator of a quality programme. An important principle to guide the definition of quality indicators is one of *appropriate inclusion*. How much detail is necessary and how much detail is limiting?

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What does it mean to have a safe environment?

For example, if one of the statements regarding quality is that "a quality early childhood programme provides a safe outdoor place to play", then it would be useful to determine what people mean by "safe outdoor space". However, it is not very helpful to specify in terms of square meters/child since this level of specificity will both limit the number of programmes that can "quality" using these criteria, and there has been no research to support the connection between square feet of play space and desirable child outcomes.

The list of quality elements should be reviewed, consolidated, rearranged, and discussed until the group is happy with their list. The next step in the process is to give that list some *reality testing* by defining each of the elements more precisely.

5. *Determine what you will use as* indicators—*the components and/or activities which are a part of quality programmes.* This involves engaging in a *progressive definition* of quality, allowing information to unfold and using the insights gained to direct or redirect the definition. This also involves moving from abstract concepts to a concrete definition of what is meant. For example, if parents say they want their children to do well in school, what does that mean? Do they have expectations that the child will complete primary school? Go to secondary school? Do they have expectations about where the child will place within his/her class?

At each step of the way in defining quality an attempt should be made to make concepts concrete and measurable by asking the question, how would I know when this dimension is present in a programme? For example, if one of the dimensions of quality that was listed was, *a safe environment*, the next question is, what does it mean to have a safe environment? Here is where the context is extremely important. A safe environment in a city might require a fenced-in yard where children can play without fear that they will chase balls into traffic. In a rural area, there may well be no need to fence in a play area for children to have a safe outdoor space.

If another indicator of quality had to do with *positive teacher/child interaction*, it would be important to define what that means in that setting. In some programmes it may mean that teachers ask children questions that challenge children to think. In another programme it may mean that children are obedient and talk only when addressed by the teacher. There are different outcomes for children with these two different styles of "positive" teacher/child interaction, with the former producing children who are more outgoing and inquisitive, and the latter producing children who are more passive. So it is important to be clear on how that interaction would look in practice in that setting.

6. *Determine what kinds of inputs are required.* In order to achieve the desired outcomes, it is necessary to consider what needs to be included in the design of a programme ("the "inputs") to ensure quality. Continuing our workshop format, one technique at this point in the workshop might be to do a Brainstorming Session where participants simply list all the things they think should be included in programme inputs. Initially, as in all brainstorming sessions, all ideas

would be included and listed for everyone to see. Once the brainstorming session was completed, then people could begin to group the items into larger categories and they could raise questions about the inclusion of items. They could also make an assessment of whether or not there were topics missing that no one had thought of initially. This fine-tuning could be done either as a whole group, or people could break into smaller groups and complete the task, then share their results with the total group.

If the small group discussion is the preferred option, there are different ways to handle the reporting. If all groups cover all the topics, the reporting can become repetitious and boring. An alternative is to have the first group report fully. Then those groups that report later only report on things that their group would *add* to the first group's list, or raise questions about items on the list that they might have discarded. This technique helps people focus on what is new and how their thinking fits with the rest, rather than hearing many ideas repeated.

In terms of the inputs, or what is required in quality programming, the following list provides a summary of the kinds of inputs that are generally associated with quality programmes. It is important to note that these are done in very abstract terms; turning these into concrete inputs (*operationalizing them*) would have to be done in relation to local conditions and resources.

The list includes all the things that help to create the environment of the programme. While the majority of these are physical/infrastructure/'enduring' dimensions, the inputs also include what the staff brings to the setting. Inputs include:

The programme approach—philosophical base for activities, goals for children, goals for adults, role of adult in relation to children, breadth/inclusiveness of activities undertaken.

Basic services—the actual services and activities offered through the programme to help assure that children are healthy, safe, have good nutrition, and receive stimulation, and the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be conveyed.

The facilities and their surroundings—location in the community (accessibility for children and families), indoor and outdoor space, access to water, toilets, washing and cooking facilities, heating, lighting, ventilation, and personal space for children ('cubbies', hooks, boxes, etc.), personal space for the teacher.

The equipment—furniture, play equipment, toys for inside and outside, learning materials, consumables (paper, paint, etc.).

The staff—qualifications, nature of their training (pre- and inservice/ theory and practice), pay and conditions of work, balance of professional/paraprofessional, supervision, access to other agencies (health, social services, community development).

Management—organizational structure, supervision and monitoring, relation to funding organization (NGO, government, private, community).

Finance—source of funds (parent, community, NGO, government, other donor agency, private), level of funding available, sustainability of funding.

Partners—the community, NGOs, government, donors, and others with whom the programme works—in collaboration or cooperation.

Within the workshop it would be important to take each of these dimensions and make it specific in terms of the context within which the ECCD programme is being developed, making it appropriate to the goals, setting and resources.

7. *Define the kinds of activities and experiences that you think should be included in the programme to achieve quality, and thus your goals.* These dimensions are often referred to as the *dynamic* dimensions of a programme. They have to do with what actually happens within the programme—whether it be a parent education effort, a child care centre which provides health, nutrition and care inputs, or a programme for older children within the early years of schooling.

In terms of the workshop model, the same process that was used to generate appropriate inputs could be used to develop a listing of process variables. The listing which follows can serve as a reference point for the workshop leader and/or it can be shared with workshop participants as a way of stimulating further discussion. It is recommended that the listing be provided *after* the group has generated their own list. Then they will not be influenced unduly in their initial thinking by the list.

The *dynamic* elements within a programme address the everyday experiences of children and adults (staff and parents). They include:

Planning—the process of defining the programme and all its components, being inclusive of all the stakeholders.

Training/Supervision—pre-service and inservice training for those delivering services, on-going supervision and support, other training to increase capacity within the organization.

Adult-child interaction—the availability of adults to children, their style of responding to children, the degree to which they engage in discussions with the children, their consistency in terms of discipline and responsiveness.

Teaching/learning—the appropriateness of activities, the extent to which the tasks challenge the children and/or parents, the way staff support learning, their sensitivity to individual differences, and the use of children's and parents' experiences/interests.

Daily activities for beneficiaries—for both parent and child-focused programmes—how they are grouped and for what purposes, the choices available to them, the extent to which they initiate activities (versus teacher-initiated activities), expectations in terms of independence versus dependence/ the individual and

the group.

Adult/adult interaction—day-to-day planning, communication among staff, sharing of information about children, mutual respect, cooperation, lines of authority.

Relationships between parents, caregivers and others—opportunities to communicate about the programme and the child, mutual respect, cooperation, participation.

Monitoring/evaluation—data gathered (on child, caregiver, parent, organization), use of data for purposes of feedback, planning, assessing outcomes.

8. *Where you have been and where you go from here.* In a workshop setting the final step would be to look back over the period of time that the group was working together to ascertain the extent to which the workshop goals were achieved. The goals we stated for this sample workshop were very broad. The kinds of activities that were suggested would provide for an *initial* discussion on each of the various topics, each one of which requires on-going input, experience and discussion. However, such a workshop would get people started in the process of working together to both define programme goals and link those goals to indicators of quality. It would also be useful to set up a process wherein the kinds of activities undertaken in the workshop were repeated periodically.

In sum, with the increased demand for quality, people have taken on the challenge of defining the concept. Sometimes they are well aware of the fact that a definition of quality is values-based; at other times standards are provided in quite a prescriptive fashion, totally denying the contexts within which the standards are expected to be applied—physically and culturally—thus bringing to despair those in the Majority World who strive for quality but cannot possibly meet the criteria determined by Western standards.

The definition of quality is a process, based very much on the values and experiences of those doing the defining. It is a process that does not yield static indicators, rather it yields markers which must be updated and revisited in an ongoing way. Further we know that:

- Quality indicators should be linked to goals.
- Quality indicators should be inclusive of:
  - *what is known about children's development,*
  - *inputs that research has demonstrated are related to outputs, and*
  - *the realities of people's lives in terms of what is required of children, within the culture and within the wider world.*
- Quality indicators should be viewed as changeable, and a process should be created for making changes. The process should include the various stakeholders.
- Quality indicators should include an understanding of:
  - *inputs/provision (the primarily static dimensions of programmes)*
  - *process/practice (the dynamic dimensions of programmes) and*
  - *desired outcomes/product.*

Prakash (1983) summarizes the situation by stating: "What is important is that *each country work out for itself structures which are essentially rooted in the culture of its people, and which respond more directly to the educational and cultural needs of its children against the overall national goals chosen by the people.*" (Italics in original, pg. 11) In multi-cultural societies the process of defining quality services for young children and their families may need to happen on a micro-level in relation to specific populations, as well as at the national level. In all settings the effort to define quality needs to be an integral, ongoing part of the programming process, and needs to include all stakeholders in young children's lives.

[1] Harms and Clifford also have an Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale—ITERS, and a Family Day Care rating Scale—FDCRS.

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Definitions of Quality in ECCD

The following examples illustrate diverse sets of quality indicators for ECCD Programmes. Some examples were derived from research, others were posited by practitioners based on their experience.

EXAMPLE 1. ■ Dimensions of ECCD Programmes That Can be Assessed to Determine Quality

GOALS FOR CHILDREN POSITED BY VEDA PRAKASH. 1983. "Battling Costs for Quality and Quantity: Emerging Response in Early Childhood Care and Education." *Notes, Comments ...(Child Family Community) Digest No. II.* Paris: UNESCO/UNICEF, pg. 63

- *develop self-identity and self-esteem,*
- *learn to live with other children and to respect the rights of others as well as valuing their own,*
- *learn to work and play independently, be at ease about being away from home and able to accept help and directions from adults,*
- *be curious and seek answers to questions,*
- *be creative and imaginative,*
- *strengthen physical skills, using large and small muscles,*
- *widen their language skill, both in listening and in speaking,*
- *control aggression and destructiveness,*
- *channel spontaneous energies to orderly behavior and work,*
- *grow intellectually and emotionally.*

EXAMPLE 2. ■ Standards of Early Childhood Programme Quality

IDENTIFIED BY L. J. SCHWEINHART, H. V. BARNES, & D. P. WEIKART. 1993. *Significant Benefits: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 27.* Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.

The authors define the elements of quality derived from their own research, and that of others, as follows:

- *effective programmes use explicitly stated, developmentally appropriate active-learning curricula that support children's self-initiated learning activities,*
- *effective teaching staff have been trained in early childhood education and do not change jobs often,*
- *effective administrators provide systematic inservice training on site and supervisory support of their staff's curriculum implementation,*
- *effective programmes maintain classes of fewer than twenty 3- to 5-year olds for every pair of teaching adults,*
- *in effective programmes, staff treat parents as partners and engage in extensive outreach to parents, such as home visits at least monthly, to learn from parents and to help them understand the curriculum and their children's development.* (pg. 17)

L. J. SCHWEINHART. 1981. *What Makes a Quality Preschool?, Keys to Early Childhood Education*, Vol 2, No. 4, April 1981

Following are seven key elements which our research indicates are essential to a quality preschool programme. We feel many of these principles are also valid for day care centers, kindergartens, family day care homes and other settings where adults provide care for other people's children.

Programme well managed, well monitored. Supervisors must know what is going on in their programmes on a day-to-day basis. They should be readily available to provide support, give realistic feedback, help solve problems and reward a job well done.

Parents involved in significant ways in educational development of the children. Teaching staff should work with parents as partners. Vehicles for parent involvement might include home visits, parent meetings with opportunities for parents to volunteer to help in the classroom.

At least two adults in classroom to provide overall support and individual attention to children. This team approach is more important than class size (which often gets more attention); a team has much greater flexibility in dealing with situations than does a solitary adult.

Significant amount of time spent in child/adult interaction. Talking, sharing ideas, playing together—these are essential, with the child initiating much of the activity. Children need adults to challenge and support them in their activities.

Teachers trained in the curriculum, able to work together as a team and under supervision. It is teachers who make quality programmes work; training and support for them is crucial.

Evaluation component in programme emphasizing day-to-day quality maintenance. Evaluation tells administrators when a programme is on the right track, or when it is in trouble.

Emphasizing quality will encourage teacher creativity and experimentation with new methods. It should never be equated with some narrow definition of perfection that keeps enthusiastic, competent teachers from following their creative hunches. Only through being with creative adults can young children learn to express their own creative impulses.

For our readers who read Spanish, we are including the following definition of quality from Peru.

EXAMPLE 3. ■ "Criterios de Calidad"

FRANCISCO BASILI. Un trabajo preparado para presentación en el "II Simposio Latinoamericano sobre Participación de la Familia y la Comunidad en la Atención Integral al Niño Menor de Seis Años." Lima, Peru. Diciembre 1994.

En el trabajo, Basili propone los siguientes criterios de calidad:

1 "La Actividad: incluye la exploración libre, el juego, la oferta de repertorios sensoriales, las ceremonias, ocupaciones, pasatiempos no reglamentados, producción artística, las rutinas, la elección libre de proyectos. Juzgamos que se favorece la actividad si el ambiente contiene elementos estimuladores, si el agente educativo combina la permisión con la inducción de actividades, si los niños y niñas complementan la acción física con el enfrentamiento de problemas que ejerciten las capacidades de discriminación, asociación, relacionamiento. Hemos asociado a la actividad las nociones de disfrute, descubrimiento, desarrollo y disciplina. Hemos considerado que no basta que el servicio mismo propicie las actividades, porque hace falta que las induzca en el hogar. Hablamos de control de actividades y de actividades de control, cuya finalidad es explicitar competencias o déficit de performance. Hablamos de programación de actividades y de tiempos de improvisación donde los propios niños y niñas escogen ocupación, determinan el ritmo y atribuyen valor a las actividades. Hablamos de recuperación de actividades ordinarias de la vida familiar y comunal y de las actividades del servicio como distanciamientos para que la familia y la comunidad reflexionen sobre sus propias prácticas de crianza."

2 "La Integralidad: implica la atención del conjunto de aspectos relacionados con el desarrollo y el bienestar del niño y la niña. Someramente, la salud, la nutrición , la seguridad, el desarrollo psicosocial. El campo de la salud se ha ampliado considerablemente. Hemos pasado de una preocupacion básica por la supervivencia, frecuentemente circunscrita a la inmunizacion, el manejo de diarreas y enfermedades respiratorias y la higiene de las personas, el agua y los alimentos, a incluir aspects como la salud mental, el desarrollo de los sentidos, el despistaje temprano de lesiones orgánicas de consecuencias conductuales. De modo similar, en nutrición nos preocupamos no sólo por la dieta adecuada, incluimos cuestiones como costoefectividad en el manejo almacenamiento, preparación y distribución de los alimentos, palatabilidad, relación entre hábitos alimentarios de las familias y comunidades, y seguridad alimentaria... En cuanto al desarrollo psicosocial, el campo se ha ampliado extraordinariamente. Quizá los conceptos más promisorios de esta ampliación sean el de talentos y el de desarrollo emocional, que han llevado a revalorar la capacidad de los agentes de los servicios para establecer relaciones personalizadas con cada uno do los niños y niñas. Ambos conceptos parecen sugerir una pedagogía del cariño para la cual las meras calificaciones profesionales podrían resultar insuficientes. Aún cuando sintamos que ya es bastante amplio este concepto, falta añadir que hoy integralidad incluye cuestiones de desarrollo familiar y comunitario, y cuestiones ambientales."

3 "La Participacion: Hoy, implica desde la definición de políticas sobre infancia y desarrollo social, el diseño de los proyectos y, de allí en adelante, la participación en la gestión, en la programación y el desarrollo de las actividades, la evaluación, el control de recursos propios y la búsqueda de financiamiento nuevo. La participación incluye a los niños y niñas, sus familias, las organizaciones de la communidad, las instancias municipales. Implica al conjunto de los agentes que brindan el servicio y de los usuarios que pueden calificarlo. Participación evoca la idea de una pedagogía del poder, es decir de un aprendizaje sobre las posibilidades que tenemos para involucrarnos en la producción de realidad, en la ejecución de proyectos elegidos. Por eso los servicios deben ser instancias en las que se refuerza y realiza la democracia."

4 "La Pertinencia. Hoy los servicios deben atender al enraizamiento en la realidad de las familias y comunidades, pero deben abrir a la diversidad de los hallazgos y tensiones de la modernidad. Hablamos de pertinencia de las actividades respecto al desarrollo individual de los niños y niñas, de pertinencia de los diseños respecto a las competencias de los agentes de los servicios, de pertinencia de los propósitos y de los usos respecto a las expectativas de las comunidades, de pertinencia ambiental.

EXAMPLE 4. ■ Elements of Quality for ECD Programmes for Children Under Three Years of Age. Creche Parentale, France

AS SUMMARIZED IN M. WOODHEAD. 1996. *In Search of the Rainbow: Pathways to Quality in Large Scale Programmes for Young Disadvantaged Children*. Final Report to Bernard van Leer Foundation, The Hague Netherlands, pg. 63.

- *an environment full of specially-constructed physical materials, objects, tools and activities, to which children are given relatively free access,*
- *high levels of individualized adult attention available to children, and tuned in to their immediate concerns (for some of the time at least), a variety of different adults available to respond to child requests,*

– *an egalitarian relationship between adults and children, founded on joint negotiation and exploration (at least for some parts of the day),*

– *the active involvement of fathers as well as mothers, playing with their children and carrying out routine child care tasks including nappy-changing,*

– *a context of diverse experiences and opportunities for exploration, including diversity among caregivers, in terms of ethnic/cultural/religious beliefs, styles of dress and behavior,*

– *a shared goal of conceptual representation, a systematic generalized way of making sense of a complex physical world,*

– *technical mastery over activities, constructional toys, the equipment and procedures of the environment,*

– *a strong emphasis on verbal communication, articulation of concepts and shared understandings,*

– *early introduction of symbolic representations, through drawings, picture books, stories, etc.*

EXAMPLE 5. ■ Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS)

T. HARMS & R. CLIFFORD. 1980. NEW YORK: TEACHERS COLLEGE PRESS. Cited in J. Brophy and J. Statham. 1994. "Measure for Measure: Values, Quality and Evaluation", in P. Moss & A. Pence (Eds.) *Valuing Quality in Early Childhood Services. New Approaches to Defining Quality.* New York: Teachers College Press, pgs 67–68.

Individual Scales in the ECERS organized by main topic areas

1. Personal care routines
   - *greeting/departing*
   - *meals/snacks*
   - *nap/rest*
   - *diapering/toileting*
   - *personal grooming*
2. Furnishings and display for children
   - *furnishings (routine)*
   - *furnishings(learning)*
   - *furnishings (relaxation)*
   - *room arrangement*
   - *child related display*
3. Language-reasoning experiences
   - *understanding language*
   - *using language*
   - *reasoning*
   - *informal language*
4. Fine and gross motor activities
   - *fine motor*
   - *supervision (fine motor)*
   - *Gross motor space*
   - *gross motor equipment*
   - *gross motor time*
   - *supervision (gross motor)*
5. Creative activities
   - *art*
   - *music/movement*
   - *blocks*
   - *sand/water*
   - *dramatic play*
   - *schedule (creative)*
   - *supervision (creative)*
6. Social development
   - *space (alone)*
   - *Free play*
   - *group time*
   - *cultural awareness*
   - *tone*
   - *exceptional provisions*
7. Adult needs
   - *adult personal area*
   - *adult opportunities*
   - *adult meeting area*
   - *parent provisions*

Example of scale from the ECERS

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Meals/snacks	Meals/snacks served on a haphazard irregular schedule and of questionable nutritional value		Well-balanced meals/snacks provided on a regular schedule but strict atmosphere, stress on conformity, meals not used as a pleasant social time or to build self-help skills *(e.g. pouring milk, setting table, etc.)*		Well-balanced meals/ snacks provided on regular schedule. Staff member(s) sits with children and provides pleasant social environment during meals and when possible at snacks. Small group size permits conversation		Everything in 5 plus time planned as a learning experience, including: self-help skills; talking about children's interests, events of the day and aspects of foods *(color, where foods come from, etc.)*

EXAMPLE 6. ■ Quality in Services for Young Children— European Commission Childcare Network

FROM: EUROPEAN COMMISSION CHILDCARE NETWORK. 1990. *Quality in Services for Young Children. A Discussion Paper.* Brussels.

We have organized our indicators of quality into 10 areas or blocks. We stress that these areas are interrelated, and that there is no hierarchy of preference or priority within them: different people may attach different priority to them and some may even reject

some areas altogether and propose others. The indicators in each are expressed as questions, are by no means exhaustive, but provide some indication of the kind of issues which might be explored.

A Accessibility and usage—This set of criteria examines the process of entry to services and the adaptability and flexibility of the service to individual family needs.

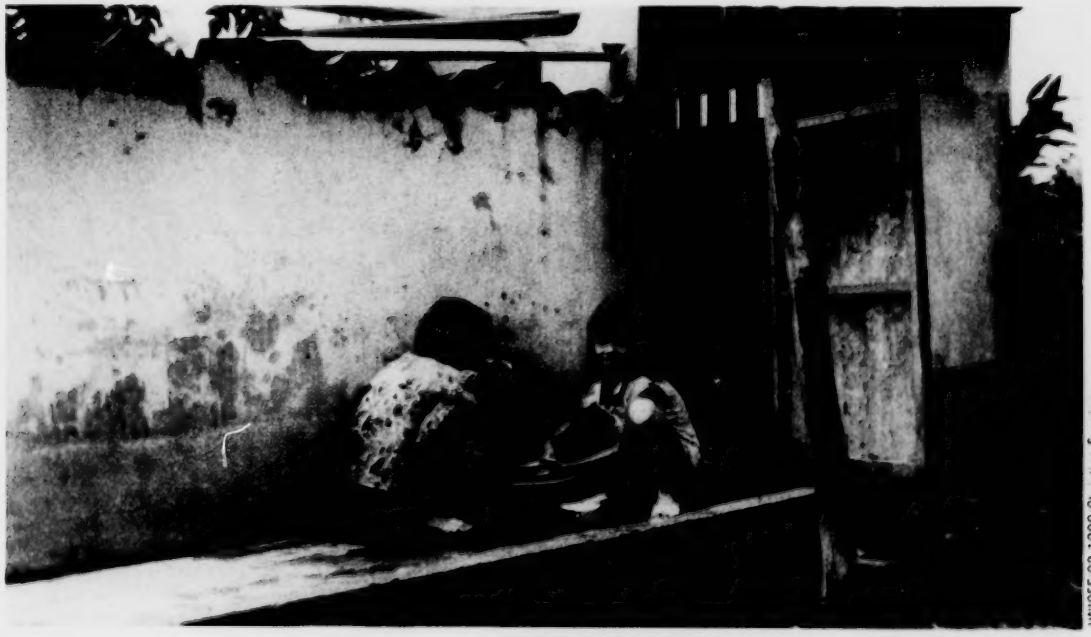
- *How easy is it for a child to gain access to a particular service?*
- *What kinds of admissions procedures are involved?*
- *What priorities are imposed?*
- *Who controls admission?*
- *Are appeals possible against decisions which have been made?*
- *Does the parent have problems about affordability of the services?*
- *Is it easy to travel from home to the service?*
- *Is negotiation possible about hours attended, or about days attended?*
- *How flexible or rigid are the routines of the nursery or childcare setting?*

B Environment—This set of criteria examines different aspects of the physical environment of services and covers a wide range of factors from health and safety to aesthetics.

- *Are the surroundings inside and outside safe?*
- *Do they promote health?*
- *Do they guard against obvious hazards and dangers?*
- *Is there access for children or adults with disabilities?*
- *Are the surroundings attractive and well-designed?*
- *Do they look aesthetically pleasing?*
- *Are the rooms sufficiently spacious to allow free movement but sufficiently cosy for quiet activities and relaxation?*
- *Are the kitchen facilities good?*
- *Are the children allowed any access to the kitchen?*
- *Is the food nutritious?*
- *Is the food attractively presented?*
- *Are mealtimes a pleasure or a chore?*
- *Are the cloakrooms and toilets of a good standard?*
- *Is there adequate storage space?*
- *Is there adequate space for staff?*
- *Is there adequate space for parents?*

C Learning Activities—This set of criteria refers to activities which develop and enhance children's cognitive and social development. ...The criteria we present in this block are very general, and we recognize that they may have already been developed in much more sophisticated ways in different countries.

- *Is there a comprehensive range of activities for the children?*
- *Are there opportunities to develop oral and written linguistic skills?*
- *Are there opportunities to develop bilingual skills?*
- *Are there opportunities to develop basic mathematical concepts?*
- *Are musical expression and musical skills encouraged?*
- *Do children have an opportunity to express themselves through play and drama, puppetry and mime?*
- *Is interest in biological and scientific concepts encouraged?*
- *Are there opportunities to develop muscular co-ordination and bodily control?*
- *Do children understand basic concepts of health and hygiene?*
- *Do children understand food purchase and food preparation?*
- *Do children have an understanding of their local commu-*



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nity and the activities which go on in it?

– Is the nursery or child care setting well-equipped with a range of furnishings and activities which promote learning?

– Can children negotiate some control over the structure and pace of activities?

D. Relationships—Relationships exist at a variety of levels and in many permutations: between adult or caregiver and child; between child and child; between the adults themselves whose own interaction and comportment inevitably set standards for the children.

– Do staff or caregivers have knowledge, understanding and experience of child development?

– Do they interact with children with warmth and kindness?

– Is there consistency of staff with children?

– Are relationships stable?

– Do individual members of staff develop relationships with particular children and know and understand their personal histories?

– How do staff treat children who behave irritably or irritatingly or who are withdrawn?

– Do staff respond to the demands, enquiries and requests of children promptly and with respect?

– Do staff cope well with special events or emergencies?

– Do the staff actively promote learning?

– Are there men as well as women as role models?

– Do staff emphasize and develop co-operative play and support relationships between children?

– Are there child-initiated activities?

– Are there adequate opportunities for play amongst children without adult interruptions?

– Are there spaces for children to play that are not constantly monitored by adults?

– Can children choose who they want to play with?

– Are there same-age peers, younger children and older children?

– Are brothers and sisters allowed to be companions?

– Are relationships between children stable?

– Are friendships supported?

– Do adults relate well to each other?

– Are the adults in hierarchial relationships to one another?

– Are there friendships among adults?

– Do the staff working with the children enjoy their work, feel pleased and confident in it?

E. Parents' Views—This set of criteria explores the nature of partnership between parents and those looking after their children.

– Are there ways of measuring parent's opinions or views about the childcare setting?

– Do parents feel welcome?

– Do parents have enough time to leave their child at the beginning and greet their child at the end of a day or session?

– Do parents feel they have enough information about the progress of their child?

– Are parents able to give information about the progress of their child?

– Are parents informed about the family activities and routines and the reasons for them?

– Can parents comment on or contribute to these activities and routines?

– Can parents stay or join in mealtimes or some other activity of the nursery or childcare setting?

– Are parents involved in discussing or setting the curriculum or programme for the nursery or childcare setting?

– Can parents be involved in the management of the nursery or in the selection of staff or in the financial control of resources?

F. The Community—This set of criteria refers to the community... The extent to which the nursery or childcare setting is sensitive to these external influences is also a useful criteria of quality.

Is the nursery or childcare setting part of its local community?

Do any of the staff live locally?

Are the interests and priorities of the local environment reflected in daily activities?

Do children visit local facilities?

Do local people who are not parents and staff have an opportunity to visit the nursery or childcare setting?

Are there other activities which go on in the place where the children are being cared for and educated?

Can the children take part in community events or festivals?

G. Valuing Diversity—This set of criteria refers to diversity, the extent to which the concept of 'normality' is explored and extended and heterogeneity accepted.

– How are issues of gender recognized and accommodated?

– How do staff and children deal with race, even if there are not black children or staff/caregivers immediately present?

– How are the needs of children, staff or parents with disabilities identified and met?

– How sensitive and tolerant are staff and children to individual differences?

– Is there a conscious attempt to understand and challenge stereotypes, and to represent and allow for cultural and physical diversity in the materials and equipment which are used in daily activities?

– Are extra resources and support available if necessary?

H. Assessment and Outcome Measures—These criteria refer to measures of children's progress and the extent to which specific problems or specific talents are recognized and accommodated.

– Are children observed regularly?

– Is the progress and development of individual children monitored, recorded and discussed?

– Is the autonomy and privacy of individual children respected?

– Is confidentiality respected?

– Are the records available to parents?

– Are parents' observations and comments used in the assessment?

– Is specialist help available when necessary, either for special medical or psychological problems or for enabling the development of particular skills such as music or art or swimming?

1 Cost Benefits—This set of criteria refers to value for money.

- *How are the costs of the nursery or childcare setting calculated?*
- *How are the benefits to parents and children weighed?*
- *Once capital costs are met, are calculations made for rent, rates, insurance, heating and lighting?*
- *Are administrative and maintenance costs included?*
- *How are the salaries or payment of those looking after children calculated?*
- *Do costs include adequate resources and replacement of consumable items?*
- *Is there regular coverage for staff illness or staff training?*
- *Is staff recruitment included?*
- *Is the food budget adequate for a balanced, varied and attractive diet?*
- *Are costs included for visits and travel of staff and children?*
- *Who meets these costs?*
- *Do parents contribute?*
- *Are some staff unpaid because they are working as volunteers?*
- *Are these costs examined in relation to user satisfaction?*
- *Are costs examined in relation to absentee rates and staff turnover?*
- *Are costs examined in relation to child turnover?*
- *Are costs examined in relation to outcome measures for children?*

1 Ethos—The ethos and regime of the nursery or childcare setting is the balance of all these quality indicators, the extent to which they are integrated and used in a coherent fashion. The more positive and coherent the programme or organization, the more it is related to the value base, the more likely it is that good quality will be achieved. We restate those values here.

- *Does the nursery or childcare setting promote good health?*
- *Does the nursery or childcare setting encourage children to be spontaneous and express themselves freely?*
- *Does the nursery or childcare setting ensure that children are respected as individuals?*
- *Does the nursery or childcare setting promote self-confidence and zest for learning?*
- *Does the nursery or childcare setting encourage a stable learning and caring environment?*
- *Does the nursery or childcare setting encourage sociability, friendship and co-operation with others?*
- *Does the nursery or childcare setting recognize equal opportunities irrespective of gender, race or disability?*
- *Is cultural diversity fully expressed?*
- *Is the nursery or childcare setting fully sensitive to family and community influences?*
- *Are the children happy?*
- *Does the nursery or childcare setting have a statement of aims and objectives which supports these values?*
- *Do all the staff agree with and support these objectives?*
- *Are there clear strategies for putting these aims and objectives into practice?*
- *Do the organization, routine and programme of activities reflect the aims, objectives and strategies?*
- *Are there factors which work against achieving these aims and objectives?*
- *How accountable is the nursery or childcare setting, and to whom?*
- *What are the criteria?*

REGIONAL PROFILE: South Asia, East Asia, and the Pacific

SHELDON SCHAEFFER, REGIONAL EDUCATION ADVISER, UNICEF

UNICEF support to early childhood development (ECD) is based on an inter-agency policy developed in 1993 and recently updated at a workshop held at the Innocenti Centre in Florence in June 1995. This policy stresses that ECD is important both in its own right, and—as the foundation for subsequent learning and education—as a major factor in the attainment of Education For All. Because of this importance, it must be more systematically planned, more effectively implemented, and more strongly supported by partnerships of governments, non-government organisations, communities, and donor agencies.

In order to strengthen and broaden UNICEF activities in ECD, the Education Cluster, in collaboration with the regional education advisers from the regional offices in South Asia, East Asia, and the Pacific, organised a workshop on ECD in Asia in Bangkok, Thailand, from December 11–13, 1995. Forty-five participants, mostly from ten South and Southeast Asian countries (Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam, Philippines, and Indonesia), took part in the workshop. These participants included the following:

- ECD and education officers from UNICEF country offices;
- education and health/nutrition advisors from the UNICEF Asian regional offices and headquarters;
- representatives from governments and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) collaborating with UNICEF in early child development programmes; and
- specialists in ECD from universities and international NGOs and networks.

During the course of the workshop, several different activities were carried out. These included descriptions of how ECD activities fit into the programmes and budgets of UNICEF country offices, the exchange of experience in ECD in the ten Asian countries, presentations concerning cross-cutting issues in ECD (e.g., nutrition and child development, health promotion for ECD, community partnerships, and global and regional networks), and the development of country action plans and recommendations for regional cooperation related to ECD.

A large variety of materials was distributed at the workshop, including descriptions of project activities, ECD training and learning materials, and copies of notes from oral presentations. In the sections that follow are presented summaries of important issues discussed at the workshop.

The Place and Importance of ECD in UNICEF Country Programmes

The scope of total ECD coverage (roughly services for children aged 3–6) in the Asian countries represented at the UNICEF workshop ranges from 2% in Myanmar, to 8% in Cambodia, to 26% in the Philippines and 33% in Viet Nam. In general, such coverage is provided by private and religious organizations.

Considerable variety is shown across the region in terms of where ECD 'sits' in UNICEF country programmes. It most often appears in Education units, with full-time officers assigned to it, in Nepal, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and Viet Nam (and with only a part-time officer in Lao PDR), but it also fits (with only a part-time officer) into the Women in Development programme in Cambodia and into the Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances (CEDC) programme in Thailand. There is no clear cut assignment of responsibility for ECD in Indonesia.

In terms of UNICEF budget allocations, even

Early childhood programming can support not only younger children, but also their older siblings who are freed from custodial care to attend school and to be children themselves. UNICEF 95-0147 Franck Charton

greater variety is shown, both absolutely and relatively. The amount of funding allocated annually to ECD ranges from no funds in Indonesia and $10,000 in Fiji, to $75,000 in Laos, $135,000 in Sri Lanka, and $140,000 in Bangladesh, $200,000 in Nepal, $300,000 in Myanmar and $325,000 in Cambodia, $677,000 in the Philippines and $747,000 in Viet Nam. In percentage terms, compared to the total education budget, this means, for example, 3% in Bangladesh, 5% in Myanmar, less than 10% in Lao PDR and Cambodia, 11% in Nepal, 15% in Sri Lanka, up to 17% in Viet Nam, and 40% in the Philippines (though a re-budgeting exercise in light of EFA goal achievements in 1995 reduced this to 20%).

There are often good reasons for such allocations. In some countries, such as Viet Nam and Sri Lanka, ECD is a strong government priority, or, as in the Philippines, a focus of strong NGO attention. This is in part because of high percentages of children found in primary education and therefore the ability of governments and NGOs to focus their attention on other levels of education—which UNICEF is willing to support. In other countries, such as Myanmar, the absence of government and NGO interest has led UNICEF to launch a major programme in the area. In Bangladesh, on the other hand, a strong government and UNICEF focus on the EFA goal of primary education has led to neglect of ECD.

Issues and Lessons Arising From Country Experiences

New Trends of ECD

Several new trends in the development and provision of ECD activities need to be taken into account. First is *the slow movement in some countries of the region toward seeing ECD as 'compulsory'* or at least as strongly desirable, a belief already the case in much of Latin America (and in strongly centralised states such as DPR Korea). In a narrow sense, this can mean that kindergarten becomes compulsory for admission to elite public and private primary schools, but it can also mean, more generally, that ECD is seen as being an integral and necessary part of basic education. While some countries in the region are first expanding the definition of basic education *up* the system, to include grades 7–9,

others are at least considering the need to expand coverage down the system as well.

Along with this trend is *the desire to give priority to expanding ECD coverage first of all to rural, indigenous, and impoverished areas*—partly as a process of positive discrimination and affirmative action toward disadvantaged areas. There is general realisation that the urban elites can take care of themselves and that greater efforts need to be put into more equitable distribution of ECD programmes.

Both of these trends imply a third: *the need for some kind of government policy in regard to ECD*. Though some governments fear that having a 'policy' means establishing an expensive state-supported ECD/preschool system, most now realise that a policy can mean many different things, from providing universal ECD coverage (as in DPR Korea) to defining core curricula, providing standardised teaching and learning materials, training (and perhaps paying for) teachers, and subsidising ECD programmes in disadvantaged areas.

A fourth trend is *the realisation that the area of ECD provides space for innovation*, a chance to move from more traditional institutional approaches to family- and community-based approaches, with new kinds of more child-centred, interactive pedagogy and stronger links between ECD and primary school, between formal and non-formal approaches, between the education of children and of adults, and between mothers and fathers.

Of particular importance is a fifth trend: *the realisation that innovations in ECD can sometimes feed back into the primary education system*. In other words, ECD is not only being viewed as facilitating, through school readiness activities, children's transition to a formal primary school. In addition, it is more and more being seen as a means, among parents, the community, and teachers, to build awareness about, and provoke the changes required in, the formal school system. This is being done, for example, through educating parents of pre-school children about what to demand from primary schools; the training of primary school teachers with preschool teachers, in more interactive, child-friendly ways (as happens in Fiji); and a special eight-week transition programme added into the first grade of school in the Philippines which is training teachers how to make the primary school more child-friendly and 'ready' for the young child. The issue here is to ensure that ECD programmes more positively influence primary schools than primary schools negatively influence ECD.

A final trend relates to *the link between ECD and child rights*. ECD is being seen as one of the development rights of the young child, as defined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and protection of the young child from abuse, both inside and outside the family, is becoming a more important rationale for ECD activities.

Who Needs to Be "Developed" and Who Does the "Development"?

In keeping with the desired inter-sectoral, inter-generational approach to ECD, there was wide-ranging discussion at the workshop concerning the variety of actors who need to be involved in ECD in order to expand it and to make it work more effectively. There was agreement that the *primary target group of ECD activities are infants and young children*, even fetuses in regard to pre-natal care and those 0–2 years of age (who are often left out of programmes which focus on institutional ECD approaches), and extending to cover children up to eight years of age, therefore overlapping with the first years of school and ensuring that children succeed in the transition into the formal system. Of most importance are young children 'at risk'—those with special needs in regard to health and survival, care, development, and protection, as well as those not receiving any available social sector services.

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In dealing with this group, a large number of actors need to be 'developed' in regard to best practices in the care and development of young children. These include:

School children and older siblings must be involved in ECD—as mobilisers of support for ECD, in mapping and gathering data in regard to issues such as child health, school health, and pupil absenteeism; as producers of programmes for children; as members of *child watch* committees; and, through school-based child-to-child approaches, in teaching and caring for younger children.

Youth (parents-to-be), especially adolescents who will soon marry and have children, must be given information and skills (e.g., through family life education)

related to good parenting and child development.

Pregnant women and new mothers must be provided knowledge and skills related to pre-natal health and care of the very young child (e.g., maternal nutrition, breastfeeding and weaning, growth monitoring).

Mothers (and fathers and other caregivers) must be taught a broad range of skills, in areas such as the best methods of stimulating and caring for children and of monitoring physical and social development. In Indonesia the village-based Posyandu (health) centres teach mothers how to use physical and psycho-motor development charts for their young children, and the BKB (Bina Keluarga Balita—centres for families with children below five years of age) train mothers how best to play with and stimulate the mental development of their children.

ECD caregivers and preschool teachers clearly must be trained in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes appropriate to holistic, integrated child development activities.

Adult educators (such as other teachers of non-formal education programmes) can play a more active role in ensuring that child development content is put into all adult education and literacy programmes.

Community and local government leaders can not only provide financial and material support to ECD activities, but also help create awareness about the need for ECD, change attitudes, and mobilise the community for action.

Community, religious organisations, and NGOs, because of close relationships with communities, are particularly well-suited to carry out research on childrearing practices, strengthen human resource capacity at the community level, and encourage networks of child welfare and development workers. *Women's associations*, especially those that reach down into local communities, can be mobilised to organise ECD activities.

Extension agents of other sectors can be encouraged to work closely with ECD programmes and organisers. These include agents in health, agriculture (with a focus on household food production), and internal affairs (with its often close link to local government).

Academics and other professionals can encourage research in areas such as traditional childrearing practices and changing risk patterns and family structures.

Government officials and policy-makers, at higher levels of the system, can be encouraged not only to provide greater financial support to ECD, but also to develop more systematic ECD policies in areas such as language of pre-school education (i.e. mother tongue vs language of primary school instruction) and a focus on disadvantaged regions.

The private sector can also get involved in general fund-raising for ECD and in the establishment of ECD programmes for children of employees.

The media can be mobilised to increase demand, build political will, and provide a channel for parental education about ECD. The Parent Effectiveness Service (PES) in the Philippines, for example, includes, in addition to home visits and group discussions, a radio programme with drama, song, and a talk-show.

Also, a video-based child development programme has recently been developed by UNICEF titled *Enhancing Early Childhood Development*. It provides essential child development knowledge, strategies, and resources which can be used by parents to support child development during the first six years of life.[7] Each of the four animated videos is accompanied by a facilitators' and parents' guidebook. The videos are to be used in conjunction with country-specific live action, and a production guidebook has been prepared to suggest ways to add country-appropriate materials. The videos can be used on national television or, in video cassette format, in a variety of group settings, including community-based parent discussion groups, training courses for professionals and para-professionals, and in health care centres.

UNICEF staff, especially representatives, programme coordinators, and project officers in all relevant sectors, also need awareness-raising in regard to the importance of ECD for the eventual success of other UNICEF activities and training in how better to organise ECD activities.

What Has to Be "Taught", and How?

Participants at the workshop also discussed what needs to be 'taught' to young children (and to their caregivers and teachers) in effective ECD programmes. One particularly interesting approach to the 'what' and 'how' was described in a Sri Lanka programme *where children are taught very practical knowledge and skills while taking part in every day activities*, including eating, bathing, washing, cleaning, and cooking. During cooking, for example, they wash rice, scrape coconuts, and cut vegetables and, while seemingly playing, they gain experience with useful work habits, learn skills such as naming objects and identifying weights, smells, tastes, shapes, relative sizes, colours, and textures, increase their vocabulary, develop gross and fine motor skills and hand and eye coordination, and learn to understand mathematical concepts and how to tell time.

Doing better in primary school, although an important by-product of ECD, should not be its main concern. In other words, the *school-readiness* function of ECD, which focuses on extending the formal school cycle downward and accelerating school instruction during the early years of life, should not be its main pre-occupation. But such readiness is important, both in reality and in terms of advocacy for ECD programmes, especially in highly competitive education systems, where a good early start may lead to later

success, and especially for the crucial, early survival grades, during which, for one reason or another (e.g., learning in an unknown national language rather than mother tongue), children often drop out of school.

An example is the eight-week transition programme in the Philippines, at the beginning of first grade, which is *teaching skills and competencies in the areas of communication, numeracy, social-emotional development, psychomotor development, and aesthetic development*, via games, stories, manipulative activities, and indoor and outdoor activities. In Bangladesh, through preschool and continuing through two years of 'learning preparedness' work in school, children are inducted into the learning routine, with the main common learning difficulties, especially in language and maths, identified and then focused on. Also, in Sri Lanka, a very useful instrument has been developed to measure children's readiness for school. It consists of a series of pictures that are used to determine a child's understanding of space, numbers, sequence, and seriation.

For parents, it is important to ensure that they understand the *facts for life*—practices leading to good health and nutrition (e.g., food supplementation, early detection of ARI, treatment of diarrhoea), how to care for simple illnesses, how to create a 'child-safe' house and help children avoid accidents, etc. It is also important to teach about *child rights*—survival, development, protection, and participation—in a way that is understandable by parents and other caregivers. This includes knowledge about the various kinds of social ills that young children may eventually encounter and need to learn how to cope with.

Parents must also *gain skills to be better caregivers, parenting the 'whole' child*—its physical, cognitive, psychosocial, and spiritual needs—by trying to ensure that children have a happy childhood, with love and affection, much play and little work, and the chance to discover the joy of learning. This means that parents must learn good parenting practices (e.g., how to play with children, how to provide discipline, and how to use the home and the immediate environment as the primary sources of learning and development before school age), and appropriate early childhood care and development techniques. The latter requires knowledge about various indicators of physical growth and mental social development. The monitoring charts developed in Indonesia represent good examples of tools that can help parents and other caregivers in this process.

Finally, parents also need to gain *a better understanding of the importance of enrolling and keeping their children (especially their daughters) in school*, of their own role in the education of their children, of how to discriminate between good and bad teaching, and good and bad schools, and of how to participate actively through the school in demanding and achieving a better quality education for their children.

How Should ECD Be Organised?

The organisation of effective ECD programmes requires both strong and supportive institutions and efficient processes. In terms of structure, one conclusion of the workshop was to try to use available organisations rather than start every time anew. In this regard, the workshop looked at two levels of the system, national and local.

■ National

An essential question is: *who, at the national level, has the power and authority to bring people together around ECD issues?* Who, in other words, has the political and/or moral authority—and the resources which might flow from such authority—to mobilise a population concerning ECD? Tapping such a person's authority—whether it be the head of state or, as is often the case, his wife—may help promote the issue.

National instruments—laws, broad policies, development plans—may also be important. In the Philippines there is a legal mandate that each village must establish a day care centre, and the Local Government Code states that local governments must provide ECD services to all constituents. Some governments are now developing more explicit policies in regard to ECD, although many are rather minimalist in nature, and more and more national development plans are including chapters on women, a chapter focused on children may also be useful.

National agencies—such as the Children's Secretariat in Sri Lanka and the National Council for the Care and Protection of Children in Viet Nam—may also be useful to promote, especially to the extent that they have some mechanisms to reach down the system to the level of the community. Another option is a coordinating or inter-agency committee, at each level, among donors, government agencies, and NGOs (such as the Inter-Agency Committee on ECD in the Philippines).

Finally, also important in the promotion of strong, systematic infrastructures for ECD are *research, training, and advocacy* units which focus on the problems (and solutions) related to ECD. A new example is Thailand's National Institute for Child and Family Development, located at Mahidol University in Bangkok.

■ Local

Organisations at the local level can be designed both to enhance ECD services and focus support for ECD from among various interested parties. In Nepal, for example, a proposal is being developed which would create a cluster system of 10 satellite home-based ECD programmes, staffed by facilitators (with a 7th grade education), managed by the Village Development Committee, provided space and materials by the community, and situated around a cluster

centre located in a primary school and staffed by a trained teacher. Such a place can be an accessible resource centre and a centre of 'good practice' where ECD workers can get help and view good care-giving and good management.

Also important is the *development and strengthening of local-level organisations and networks concerned with the health, welfare, and rights of the young child.* Such community-based networks can serve to motivate the community around ECD, operate as a kind of village 'watch' to ensure implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), maximise opportunities and resources from all potential sources, help improve the community's readiness for, and environment surrounding, the child, and enhance links and exchanges between communities.

This is where *partnerships for ECD become important*—a different mix of partners at each level, each with a clear definition of tasks and responsibilities. In Nepal, for example, the Primary Curriculum and Textbook Development Unit develops ECD curriculum, trains teachers, provides guidelines and necessary materials, and supervises and evaluates programmes; the District Education Officer motivates local communities to establish and run activities; the community arranges for space, teachers, and other materials; parents provide books and pens, send children regularly to the programmes, ensure cleanliness of their children, and share information about the progress of their children; and teachers try to be aware of the interests and capability of each child, give attention to the learning process, inform parents about the children's progress, and keep evaluation records of the children.

■ Other principles of organisation

Besides the above structural issues relating to the organisation of ECD programmes at national and local levels, a number of other principles related to the process of developing these programmes are important to consider.

Integration The integration of ECD is required in several different ways.

– Integration *within* the Ministry of Health itself is obviously important, to ensure that units concerned with mothers and young children (for example, nutrition, breastfeeding, and immunisation) work well together.

– *The combining of various ECD programmes in one larger system*—as in Viet Nam where the ECD programme includes daycare centres, parent education, growth monitoring, regular health check-ups for mothers and children, credit schemes and savings groups for women, immunisation, nutrition education, women's literacy programmes, home visiting, and the teaching of agricultural skills. In one year a pilot of such integrated services has led to remarkable improvement in women's and children's health status and household food security. The credit scheme of this programme is especially interesting. (See Case Study on page 45)

– *Integrated training* is also important, so that all major actors in ECD, at each level, are trained together. This includes, among others, ECD workers, managers, local extension agents from concerned sectors, and primary school teachers.

– *The involvement of all possible media in ECD programming can also help to promote ECD.* Advocacy, mobilisation, and education by radio is one example, as is the use of sermons and other religious messages (in churches, temples, and mosques) to promote ECD messages.

Grounding in local reality Another important organisational principle is that *ECD programmes should be based on local resources, on the everyday life of the family and, to the extent possible, on traditional child-rearing practices and existing knowledge.* As shown in a study in Lao PDR, while some of these practices may be harmful to the child, many more deserve to be encouraged and strengthened. Related to this is the use of local culture and language—as well as local rhymes, religious sayings, folk tales, games, festivals, puppets, plays, songs and lullabies—in ECD programmes.

ECD programmes should strive to build upon local culture, language and practices. UNICEF/93-1744/Roger Lemoyne

One way to gain information on such local practice, among other important data, are *knowledge, attitude, and practice (KAP) surveys.* These can assess such issues as attitudes of mothers and fathers towards having children, knowledge about children's needs, child-rearing practices which help and hinder child development, caretaking practices

that help social-emotional development, knowledge about dangers and risks around the home, indicators of physical development, common practices for cognitive and language development, perceptions about the relationship between home-based and school-based activities, perceptions about school skills and the parents' role in the development of such skills, and discriminatory behaviour in parenting practices, especially in regard to girls.

Related to this is the *need to use participatory methods of needs assessment, programming and planning, implementation, and evaluation*. In other words, methods should be found to involve children, women, men, and the community at large in ECD activities. Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) methods are an example of this, including the mapping of ECD services and families with young children.

Clarity of roles and process. Another important principle is *the need to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the various actors in ECD programmes*. In order to determine an appropriate division of labour among the various actors at various levels in ECD, a matrix is useful—of who (government, NGOs, the private sector) does what in regard to the primary target group (young children at various ages), to caregivers (parents, siblings, parents-to-be, and other caregivers), and ECD shareholders and interest groups (community leaders, trainers, extension agents of other sectors, academics and professionals, government officials, policy-makers, the public). Once such a matrix is developed, it is easier to determine, for example, gaps in services, where additional resources and training are required, etc.

It is also important to clarify what is meant by good ECD practices. This is where it is useful to have (e.g., for parents, daycare workers, teachers) clear manuals, guidebooks, curriculum guides, record formats, (self) evaluation materials, and checklists of milestones in the child's physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and linguistic development.

Related to this is *the need to have systematic methods for tracing and tracking*—tracing the progress of children related to various services of ECD (e.g., immunisation and growth monitoring) and tracking down those who do not avail themselves of these services. In any given community, it is therefore important to be able to list children by age (e.g., through local government or church records or a special census or survey), record various milestones in their development, and determine who, within the community, is responsible for ensuring that children, especially children at risk and with special problems, use the services provided. Such a monitoring process can also focus on issues related to child protection.

How Can ECD Success Be Measured?

The first issue related to the monitoring and evaluation of ECD 'success' is that *monitoring and evaluation processes must be integrated into ECD programmes, from their very beginning*, and into the ways of thinking of participants, both organisers and implementers. Monitoring and evaluation also need to be structured so that they look both at the more quantitative issues of coverage and costs and at the 'flavour' and nature of the programmes. They also need to be used both for system accountability and central planning purposes, and for individual project improvement and localised planning.

Another issue is the need to ensure that *there is clear reporting to the family concerning the progress of the child*. This can serve as strong feedback to increase parental awareness about the usefulness of ECD activities and to strengthen their demands for higher quality ECD programmes.

A third issue relates to *the need to focus assessment particularly on children and families at risk*. ECD planners, programmers and practitioners need to know whether their programmes and activities are useful for those who need them most.

A further issue, given the lack of developed evaluation systems in many countries, is *self-evaluation* (for parents, caregivers, and institutions). In Sri Lanka, a self-evaluation package, called *Where Am I Going*, has been developed which asks teachers to evaluate themselves in areas such as free play, storytelling, the use of the environment, language development, etc. There is a similar checklist developed as a chart that can be hung on the wall so that parents can see what should be happening in the programme.

Home observation of parents' knowledge, skills, and behaviours and their impact on the child's development is also important. This can be labour-intensive, of course, but can also provide direct feedback to parents on their parenting skills and on the effectiveness of parent education programmes.

ECD programmes must also develop a variety of indicators—physical, behavioural, neurological, linguistic, etc.—to assess children's progress. The important thing is to ensure that these are very much *practitioner* and *parent-friendly*.

A final issue is *the need to develop and clearly define the year 2000 goals*. Who will define the indicators used to measure these goals? Will such indicators be only quantitative in nature (e.g., the percentage of children who are in preschool, or in a range of ECD programmes) or more qualitative (the percentage of children who enter school 'ready' or with developmental delays)?

Problems and Constraints

Despite the achievements and trends related to the development of ECD in the region, many difficulties remain. These include:

- *difficulties in expanding access to, and improving the quality of, ECD programmes to those who need them most*. ECD activities usually focus on older children (aged 5–6) living in urban areas. The preferred approach is either mere child-minding (a place to leave and feed children) or an academic, instructional approach in preparation for school—rather than on integrated child care and child development.
- *the low status of ECD itself and of its teachers and workers*. In comparison to teachers in the formal system of education and to workers (such as health and agricultural extension workers) in other sectors, ECD personnel are generally badly paid (if at all) and without security and often little motivation. This is where the issue of incentives becomes important—the problem of losing volunteers from ECD activities and the need, therefore, to devise non-salary incentives such as access to income-generating activities, field trips, free health care at local hospitals and appreciation from the local community.
- *rivalries and competition within the community*, exist despite myths to the contrary. Thus, communities are often riddled with conflict, lack solidarity, and have limited time and energy to participate in ECD activities.
- *poor coordination and weak intersectoral linkages at all levels*. Various parts of the education system itself (day care, pre-school, and the primary school) often work together for coordinated attention to the young child, and concerned sectors, such as health and social welfare, usually collaborate even less.
- *The politicization of ECD*, as in Latin America, where it is popular with the people and therefore in the rhetoric of competing political parties. Thus, ECD programmes begun by one government may not outlast changes in government. To make the distinction used in Latin America, if a programme is not a commitment of the State (irrespective of government), it will not survive long.
- *the fear of governments that any involvement in ECD will invariably lead to excessive demands* for expensive, formal ECD systems which most can ill afford.
- *the premature (and often simplistic) rush to develop and disseminate a standard model* which is meant to work in all regions and among all strata of a given country.

Suggestions for Future National and Regional Action

At the workshop country teams were asked to develop plans for short-term action (i.e., what they would do once they returned to their offices based on what they learned at the workshop) in order to expand and strengthen ECD services.

A common theme across the teams was *the need for UNICEF itself to play a larger role in advocacy, mobilisation, partnership-building, and awareness-raising at all levels of the system*: international (e.g., via donors), regional, national, and local, village. The need here is to present arguments for investment in ECD which include, but go beyond, its role in preparing children for primary school into other economic, social, and psychological areas. In this regard, several ideas were raised:

- the shared packaging and marketing of ECD within a region and beyond;
- media initiatives, again at both the local level (e.g., through popular theatre) and the national level;
- fund-raising—for example, determining which donors are most willing to support ECD activities and framing the proposal to meet donor expectations (e.g., linkages with Women in Development (WID), the girl child, the environment, indigenous peoples);
- the writing of case studies and demonstrations of effective programme models;
- the location of ECD in the context of child rights and human development;
- the use across borders of key decision-makers who have opted for strong ECD programmes; and
- well-targeted seminars and study tours.

Other areas for regional exchange:

■ Training

- to identify and prepare a directory of organizations, institutions, and individuals working in ECD within the region (e.g., regional universities);
- to prepare an inventory and content analysis of existing training materials in the region, leading to the sharing of materials, methodologies, and approaches, including different packages, videos, and tested practices;
- disseminate how to plan and design different training programmes (e.g., for parenting or child-to-child education or the training of trainers);
- address issues of certification/credentialing; and
- examine how to organise training in ECD at the regional level—with country teams attending, perhaps using global training funds (e.g., the University of Victoria model implemented in the region).

■ Curriculum/ Materials

- prepare an inventory of existing materials in the region (curriculum, support materials, toys, etc.) for both young children and parents;
- develop an ECD curriculum framework that could be used across countries within the region—with a "how-to" manual (e.g., community-based curriculum);
- identify regional resource persons who can assist in

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Research needs to be made available to all—parents, community planners, practitioners, and policymakers.

ECD curriculum development; and
- organise fora to discuss issues of particular importance (e.g., language use in ECD curriculum)

■ Indicators

- identify common quantifiable indicators; e.g. the number of children (boys and girls), teachers, centres, and training courses;
- develop a set of 'core' quality indicators, leaving flexibility for country-specific needs in order to measure impact at different levels (the child, family level, community);
- address validity and reliability issues—how to develop 'built-in' processes to assure accuracy of data; and
- examine the various batteries of tests developed elsewhere (e.g., the International Education Association (IEA) study).

■ Research

This is a neglected area, yet it is basic to all aspects of ECD and needs to be central to ECD programmes.

What to do research on

- basic and baseline information and data for policy analysis, planning, and programming;
- insight into the behaviour of children (aged 0–8), especially as these relate to gender differences, child-rearing practices, and socialisation processes;
- understanding of cultural contexts;
- studies and research demonstrating the benefits of ECD (including economic and social analyses);
- unique populations (AIDS-affected children); e.g. what is the extent of the problem and what are its unique characteristics?
- assessments of the impact of the programme.

How to do the research

- explore new methodologies (e.g. action research, with the involvement of target groups);
- make research available to all—parents, community, planners and policymakers—and as a tool for public education; and
- use all possible partners in research, across sectors—universities, NGOs, school teachers, community workers, training institutes, departments of monitoring and evaluation.

In addition, UNICEF should go beyond general advocacy to *assistance with national policy formulation*. ECD is an area where ill-informed policy decisions can go seriously wrong, with long-term consequences (e.g. use of national language rather than mother tongue, the development of entry tests for primary schools), thus, the need for informed debate as such policies get developed.

UNICEF can assist as well in *the development of networks which combine an interest in child development and child rights—and the media*—perhaps for the purpose of multi-country funding. This includes activities such as the Save the Children Fund Strong Beginnings programmes which attempts to integrate ECD, Women in Development (WID), family development, and preschool activities.

In sum, within the region there is a wide diversity of experience in ECD programming. The opportunity to share experiences across countries was invaluable and will lead to mutual support and additional sharing which will enhance ECD programming throughout the region.

"Here are two wonderful coconut shells.
Now they are hung with a brown string.
And some pebbles and rocks and stones
And our fine little scale is now complete."

ECCD in Sri Lanka

by Judith L. Evans

Based on presentations by: Ms. Amara Amarasinghe, Project Officer, Early Childhood Education, UNICEF; Ms. Chintha Akuretiyagama, Director, Children's Secretariat, Ministry of Transport and Women's Affairs; Mr. P. K. Arivasena, National Institute of Social Development at the UNICEF Regional Meeting in Bangkok, December 1995.

Sri Lanka is a country that historically has placed a high value on education. Thus the government has consistently made the funding of education a priority. Children begin school at age five, and most of the children enroll (overall 93.1%; urban 93.6%; 92.6% rural) and remain at school until Grade 5. (There is a 91.6% completion rate for grades 1–5.) At that point more boys than girls begin to drop out, primarily to undertake work to earn money for the family. (The dropout rate for boys is 4.9% and for girls it is 3.8%—from grades 1–9.) The repetition rate is 7.74% Grades 1–5 and 5.04% Grades 6–8.)

In 1979, the International Year of the Child, the government established the Children's Secretariat. In 1986, Sessional Paper no 111 on ECCD was submitted to the government by the Children's Secretariat, making ECCD a priority within the country. It provided a national policy in support of the care and education of young children and put forward a delivery system for ECCD programmes. Support centres for ECCD programmes were established in each division. The plan also specified a management structure and staff development plans. Emphasis was given to the development of ECCD programmes in the plantations and new settlements. Resources were allocated to support ECCD activities at both the national and district levels. Also, an experimental ECCD project was initiated.

In 1991, UNICEF participated in creating a Plan of Action (NPA) with the National Planning Department, Ministry of Policy Planning and Implementation. Within the NPA the main emphasis in terms of government provision is on home-based approaches to ECCD, with formal preschool and day care services being provided by NGOs, the private sector and religious bodies. Today 25% of preschool-aged (3–4 year old) children attend preschool.

Two different studies have been conducted that guide UNICEF's work in the country. One was a study of the impact of preschool. The study measured social competency, writing and movement coordination, letter reading, terms of relations (spatial development), sentence structure, language competency, counting, quantity and maths. Four groups of children were compared: those with no preschool, those who attended for 1–6 months; those who attended for 7–12 months and those attending for more than a year. Those who had some preschool experience did significantly better than those without preschool. However, it was also discovered that children attending preschool more than one year (i.e. 2 years) did not do significantly better than those who went for only 1 year. In fact, their performance was essentially equivalent. The study also revealed that the mother's education was the best

predictor of children's performance in all subjects except quantity and maths, where the father's education is a better predictor. The mother's education is also the best predictor of children's health status.

The second study was conducted in 1988, to better understand the education needs within the country. A national study on the entry competency of Primary 1 children was completed by the National Institute of Education. A sub-sample of children in deprived areas was included. The instrument used to measure children's readiness for school could be adapted to other cultures. It consists of a series of pictures that are used to determine children's understanding of space (position, distance), number, sequence and seriation. There is also a test of language development. The findings from the study led to curriculum reform in Primary 1 and textbook reform.

In conducting its work in Sri Lanka, UNICEF, together with the Children's Secretariat, identified a number of problems that are now being addressed directly.

1. Only 25% of the 3–4 year-olds go to preschool. Thus there was a need to reach the other 75%. To do this the home-based option was developed. This has taken the form of home-based activities to strengthen parental skills in optimizing the home and the immediate environment as the primary source of learning and development before school age. Within this line of activity UNICEF has been:

- developing the activity booklet to be used by parents;
- supporting the development of a structure for the delivery of parent education through the government infrastructure and NGOs;
- designing a model for mobilization of the home-based programme. (See case study below.)

2. There is no uniformity in provision since a variety of organizations and agencies are involved in preschool provision. Thus there was interest in the promotion of quality in preschool education. To move toward more uniformity, a set of guidelines have been developed and activity books have been created. Within this initiative UNICEF is supporting:

- a study on the situation of pre-school education;
- a forum for the exchange of ideas among NGOs;
- the development of guidelines for preschools;
- the development of activity books for preschools; (materials for preschool teachers have been developed)
- the design of teacher training programs;
- the creation of self-evaluation packages for preschool teachers.

3. There is a lack of institutional support to monitor and evaluate preschool programmes. In response, a self-evaluation package was developed that teachers can use to assess their own programme.

The Self-evaluation package is worth disseminating to others. It is titled, *Where am I going?* Teachers are asked to evaluate themselves in terms of eight content areas: free play, an understanding of children's differences, storytelling, the use of the environment, aesthetics, health, language development, and maths. The tool comes in two forms. There is a chart that is hung on the wall. Parents can refer to this to see what should be happening within the school. Teachers also have this in booklet form and they use it weekly to check on their own programme.

4. There is a lack of co-ordination among organizations working for early childhood development. In response to this need an NGO forum has been created where ideas and experiences can be shared, and for the purposes of creating a better system for coordinating the activities of NGOs. Work is also being done with NGOs to design appropriate preschool programmes for children in the rural areas. Also, a resource group is being created to assist the Children's Secretariat.

Currently a study of preschool education is underway that should provide data for use in the pursuit of other activities.

UNICEF/90-203/Jorgen Schytte

The mother's education is the best predictor of children's health status.

CASE STUDY

The Home-Based Programme The results of the Grade 1 study indicated that 30% of urban and 60% of rural children were not ready for school. Thus the decision was made to focus on home-based programmes in remote areas with an emphasis on mothers.

The programme is designed to train parents to:

- to be aware of developmental stages and recognize them;
- to identify learning situations at home through daily activities;
- to recognize the human and material resources in the home environment;
- to stimulate children while attending to daily work;
- to recognize the difference in children's development over time.

To develop the curriculum the team visited homes and observed the kinds of activities that adults and children were engaged in throughout the day. They got parents to talk about their children, what they were like and what they could do. This stimulated parents to pay more attention to what their children were doing and got them involved in what their children could learn.

The resulting curriculum is based entirely on household activities. In the booklets provided for parents there are pictures of common activities and an explanation of what the child learns while undertaking a given task. It also suggests ways parents can stimulate problem-solving skills and encourage the use of language while involved in the tasks.

A series of 8 activity books has been created for the village group to share with parents. Since most parents can read and write, they are given the materials directly. One of the booklets is on Cooking. Within the booklet the curriculum addresses six areas:

1. While getting the rice ready for cooking
2. While washing and cooking rice
3. While scraping coconut and extracting milk
4. While cutting vegetables
5. While getting curries ready for cooking
6. While making *mallun* and salads

And within each of these areas there are six specific activities that can be undertaken with children, some for children under 3 and the others are for children over 3 years of age.

One of the most important impacts of the programme is that it has *stimulated adult-child interaction*. Traditionally there is little communication between adults and children. The activities in the curriculum encourage and require adults to talk to children. This has been very positive in terms of children's language development and the strengthening of the bond between parents and their children.

The programme is introduced in a village through the Village Committees. (There are 3 Village Committees within each District Secretariat Division.) The programme is being implemented by 48 Village Committees in the Sinahala Area and 12 Village Committees in the Tamil Area, each committee consists of 10 members. There are 3 facilitators per village; facilitators are volunteers. Each of the three facilitators within the village is assigned to work with about 6 children.

The work of the Village Committees is supported by Middle Level Officers, who in turn are supported by Divisional Secretariat and Divisional Planning and Education Officers. To begin the programme, the Village Committee prepares a map of the community and identifies families with preschool aged children. The facilitators then go from house to house and invite parents to be a part of the programme. Subsequently the facilitator either does home visits or works with the parents in a group. Once a month the facilitators get together to share experiences and do planning. Neighboring villagers are invited to attend one of the group meetings to learn about the programme and determine if they want to set up something comparable in their village. There is now a high demand for the programme. As parents see what the programme has done for other parents and their children, more parents are requesting to be included. There is high competition in terms of education, so if parents see other children getting ahead, they want the same for their children.

This programme is excellent in its use of everyday activities to support all aspects of children's growth and development. The curriculum for the programme is solidly grounded in everyday experience, and truly builds on the activities and culture that exists.

For more information on the activities of UNICEF in Sri Lanka and the programme, contact:

Amara Amarasinghe
Project Officer/Early Childhood
UNICEF, P.O. Box 143, Colombo Sri Lanka
Tel: (94-1) 589101, 586168, 587282;
Fax: (94-1) 502809

UNICEF 90-016 Jon Lasch

ECCD in Viet Nam

by Judith L. Evans

Based on presentations by: Ms. Nguyen Thi Bich, Assistant Project Officer, Early Childhood Education; Ms. Nguyen Thi Ngoc Cham, Deputy Director ECCD Department, Ministry of Education and Training (MOET); Ms. Le Thi Anh Tuyet, Director, ECCD Department, MOET; at the UNICEF Regional Meeting in Bangkok, December, 1995.

Viet Nam is a country with a population of 73 million. There are 53 provinces, 520 districts, and 53 ethnic minorities. There are 10 million children 0–5 years of age. 2.2 million are in some form of an ECCD programme. 7.76% of the 0–3 age group is in child care, and 32.9% of the 3–5 year-olds (65% of five-year-olds) are in kindergarten.

In 1989, Viet Nam's Government began a shift to a market economy and began phasing out government subsidies. Since then Viet Nam has achieved remarkable macro-economic growth, and many state services have been privatized, including day care. As a result, many services once accessible to all families are no longer within the means of poor families. One problem facing poor families is appropriate day care.

Viet Nam is moving toward a decentralized administrative structure. There are administrative offices and People's Committees at the central, provincial, district and commune levels. The District level Management Committee is responsible for education at the commune level. There is a Commune Management Committee that is responsible for the home-based and centre-based day care programmes and for the kindergartens.

Kindergartens can be found in primary schools, some are institution-based, and some are community-based. The kindergartens are used as the base for the support and training of day care childminders. At the present time the Government is focussing on the five-year-old group in an attempt to prepare them for school. (Ten percent of the government education budget is devoted to ECCD.)

In UNICEF's programme they are supporting the development of:

- community- and home-based ECCD programmes;
- primary education—non-formal and formal;
- innovative programs such as credit schemes; and
- the Viet Nam National Committee for the Protection of Children.

CASE STUDY

Home Based Day Care Centres (HBDCC)

In early 1994 UNICEF began to support a local credit scheme that was developed in conjunction with home-based day care centres. The programme is being implemented in minority communities in two of Viet Nam's poorest provinces. The project involves the Viet Nam Women's Union at the local level and the Early Childhood Development Department for the Ministry of Education and Training for training and supervision. The project currently covers 1800 families with 730 children under the age of 3 being served in six communes.

The Viet Nam Women's Union (VWU) motivates and selects women to be the day care mother (childminder). Those selected are VWU members who are in good health, show enthusiasm and love for children, and are willing to take on the task. They may be literate or not. They are trained by day care or kindergarten teachers in

the same commune. They are provided with cloth charts with health and nutrition messages that they display in their 'centre', which is usually their home. (The cloth charts are durable and can be washed!) One childminder looks after 4–10 children. Centres are generally open from 7–11 A.M. and again from 2–5 P.M., although the schedules may differ from village to village depending on the needs of the mothers.

Parents bring cooked food to the centres for the children's meal. Every parent contributes 20 kg of *paddy* per year, and the community pays the childminder 50,000 VN Dong (about US $5.00) per year for running the HBDCC. (The estimated annual costs for one HBDCC serving 10 children is US $37.)

The programme encourages family-based food production systems, based on traditional uses of foods. This can include a vegetable garden, fish ponds, and/or the raising of livestock—primarily pigs. The Women's Union encourages its members to provide fruits for the children; oranges are abundant in the area. The motto is "One fruit tree and one animal for the children."

One of the unique features of this programme is the credit scheme with which it is connected. All the mothers of the children in the HBDCC, as well as the childminders, are members of the credit scheme. On a rotating basis, they receive US $30 to develop income-generating activities within the family. (These generally are linked to the food production activities listed above.) Women are eligible for the credit scheme if:

- they have children under the age of five who are malnourished and attend the day care centre;
- they are pregnant;
- they have children who have dropped out of school;
- they are illiterate; or
- they are childminders or health workers.

There are 10 women in each savings group. Only 8 of the 10 women in the group have a loan at a given point in time. Thus there is considerable pressure on the women with loans to pay back their loans so that other women in the group can take out a loan. The loans have to be paid back in 6 months. Each month the woman pays back part of the principle plus 2% interest, plus she makes a contribution to the savings fund. (The interest is used to cover costs of: inflation (15%), risk (10%), administration (25%), incentives (40%) and social welfare (10%).) Women are able to receive three cycles of loans (for $30, $40, and then $50). Their eligibility depends on their ability to pay back previous loans. After the third loan it is assumed they will be able to continue their income-generating activities without support. If women are unable to pay back their loans on schedule, other women in the group help them out. There is also a range of contingencies when animals die, etc.

The savings groups are organized into Clusters, with 5–10 groups in a cluster. The Clusters are overseen by the Steering Committee, consisting of 7 members. The Chair is the Chair of the Women's Union. The other members are selected by the Women's Union and usually include one ECCD teacher.

Once a month the members of the credit scheme meet together. The meeting includes health workers, teachers and managers of the credit scheme who provide information on child care, nutrition, safe motherhood and family planning, and management of the credit scheme. The monthly meeting is also the time for collecting capital and interest and savings connected with the loans. In addition, a literacy programme has also been introduced.

To date loans have been provided to 232 women by UNICEF. In 1995 the groups were able to provide an additional 154 loans from the savings already generated by the project. Thus a total of 386 women have received loans. The project has gone from 3 communes to 29 communes involved in the scheme.

Community reaction to the project has been positive. The enrolment of children and the use of the day care services resulted in the creation of effective linkages between education, families and communities. Local teaching staff now have relationships with families to the extent that they consider themselves members of the children's families and feel free to discuss issues of child care, nutrition and attitudes with mothers. Community leaders are aware of the importance

Health and nutrition messages on durable cloth posters.

of early child care and development and are supportive of the centres. Mothers are happy that their children are well looked after. Women are provided with an opportunity to meet, participate in group discussions, to talk and learn from one another. Girls are freed from taking care of younger siblings; they can go to school and help to improve their family's quality of life.

An evaluation of one commune after a year of being involved in the programme showed the following results:

- the commune went from having no home-based day care centres to having eight;
- they went from having two centre-based day care centres to having three;
- they went from two to three kindergartens;
- there was a significant improvement in women's health. Before the programme only 64 out of 300 women were healthy; at the end of the year 215 were healthy;
- children's health status also improved. At the beginning there were 145 healthy children among the 308; after one year this increased to 215 out of 308;
- the percentage of families without sufficient food for a month decreased from 96% to 51.5%; and
- 182 women achieved literacy.

Not all these improvements are the direct result of the HBDCC programme as there are other UNICEF initiatives in the same communes, such as integrated health, nutrition, and water and sanitation projects. However this is a good example of how an integrated approach to family support can help create positive outcomes for both children and the community.

For more information about the activities of UNICEF in Viet Nam and this programme, contact:

Nguyen Thi Bich
Assistant Project Officer, ECD
UNICEF, Hanoi
72 Ly Thuong Kiet, Hanoi, Viet Nam
Tel: (84-42) 61170; Fax: (84-42) 626412

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Network Notes

Letters to the Editor

The next issue of the Coordinators' Notebook *will address the topic of Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances. We invite submissions and communication about this topic and your related experiences.*

Botswana, January 1996

Thank you for the letters once more and the books on early childhood care and development.

The books have given me more strength and courage after reading them. It's also interesting to know that there are people who are illiterate in other parts of the world like many of us.

I would like to briefly share our programme. We are training teachers from ten schools in the district, and at the same time trying to involve parents in early childhood education activities. It's progressing slowly, since parents think school is for teachers and they think they can't take part because they are illiterate. We've been running workshops to mobilize parents and holding awareness meetings. As time goes on mothers have participated in various activities like meetings, cleaning school premises. However, most fathers have not participated.

We never let ourselves become discouraged and today we are very proud to announce that at the beginning of this year mini-workshops were held in the settlements again. This time fathers helped mothers to sew children's clothes. We are planning for yet another parents' workshop at the end of this month and hoping for the best.

Regards,

Eirene Thupe, Training Supervisor
KURU Development Trust
P.O. Box 219 GHANZI, Botswana

Dominica, November, 1995

Christian Children's Fund Area Office is taking the initiative in having our Government establish National Policy on Early Child Development Programmes (ECDP). We understand that Policy is currently in draft.

Currently in Dominica, that programme falls within the responsibility of some Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), the main NGO being the Social Centre which is a Catholic Church organisation. They have been running Pre-Schools and Creches on the island

Letters to the Editor

with very limited resources. It is now being recognised that there is the need to develop ECDP in Dominica and that this programme is not limited to its physical aspect i.e. the Pre-School building, but it incorporates the psycho-social development of the child with parents serving as partners and having a sense of 'ownership'.

Dominica has little or no financial resources of its own and therefore feel that this qualifies us for further assistance to formalize and establish on a National level ECDP. We wish to be on a par with other developing states. In the meantime many of our children are denied the basic rights to early educational opportunities.

To help us in our developmental programme, may I request the following:

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Francis Joseph, Area Programme Director
Christian Childrens Fund, Dominica Area Office
22 Hillsborough St. Roseau, Commonwealth of Dominica

Bangkok, August, 1995

Thank you very much for ... sending us The *Coordinators' Notebook*. I am very interested in receiving it as I found that it is really useful for my work and the staffs. As you might hear from the [Bernard van Leer] Foundation, we are working for an early childhood care and education programme for border line children along the Thai-Cambodian border. The work itself is concentrated on teacher training and community participation in child development. How is it going to be while they have to survive from their work and their situation of bombing, can you guess?

I am willing to send you more information about our work in the near future.

Sincerely yours,

Sivika Prakobsantisukh, Liaison Officer
Group for Development and Education for Children (DEC)
110/6 Red Rose Court C1, Pradiphat Rd., Saphankwai
Bangkok 10400, Thailand

Lesotho, August, 1995

This is to acknowledge receipt of *Coordinators' Notebook*—a publication that has brought fresh perspectives on the issue of childcare. We are announcing its arrival in our library, where it can be accessed by children-oriented organisations and individuals. We hope you will accept contributions of articles from our constituency as well. In turn we are also happy to add your organisation to the list of the organisations receiving our Newsletter, The NGO Web so we could exchange.

This to us means the beginning of another meaningful partnership. Thanking you once again, I am,

Sincerely Yours,

Mateboho Green, Public Relations Officer
Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (LCN)
Private Bag A445, Maseru 100 LESOTHO, Southern Africa

Haifa, April, 1995

Thank you for the kind letter you did send us on March 1, 1995 and for the so useful *Coordinators' Notebook*.

My feedback regarding the publication you sent me:

Letters to the Editor

–The materials are very useful, give the reader the opportunity to visit the children's worlds all over the Third World.

–It enriches our knowledge with the local valuable experiences of the peoples of the Third World.

–May you publish more photos of happy faces on your *Notebook*. I have the feeling that child's smiles and tears shouldn't be separated, specially on publications about children.

Information about our activities which can contribute to the *Notebook*:

Determined to "improve the educational status and living conditions of Arab children in Israel," a group of concerned Arab professionals founded the Arab Children Friends Association. In the five years since its establishment, ACFA has focused on two main projects: the Publication of the children's magazine *Alhayat Lilatfal*, and a program of yearly festivals. *Alhayat Lilatfal*, meaning "Life for the children", is published bimonthly for the target age group of 7–12. This magazine helps to bridge the gap between Arab children and their Jewish counterparts by providing them with an opportunity to express their artistic and creative skills. It also explains their own unique Palestinian history and culture, which is not covered in the curriculum of Arab schools [which] rely on learning by rote. *Alhayat Lilatfal* emphasizes educational games and problem-solving aimed at promoting children's analytical abilities and developing their way of thinking. Arab children are encouraged to write letters to the magazine which are profiled in the nine pages that are devoted to children's writings. They also are asked to send in their art work. *Alhayat Lilatfal* responds to the lack of health education in Arab schools as well by including at least two articles on health care and medical issues in every issue. Other regular headings include "Games of our Grandfathers", "Palestinian Folklore", "Know our Villages", "Children Around the World", "Children's Rights", and "The Story behind the Quote" (which explains the origins of famous quotations and idioms). Overall, *Alhayat Lilatfal* educates, explains and involves Arab children....

The Folkloric Arts and the emphasis on our identity are not part of the curriculum in the Arab Schools. Our associations publishing (the *Alhayat Lilatfal* magazine and various books) aims at bridging the existing gap through implanting morals and identification in our children expressed in our Folkloric Arts....

We hold several projects for the Arab children, but we don't have enough budgets for these projects, so can you suggest for us any candidate donors who can be interested to be involved with any of our projects."

Meanwhile I remain

Yours sincerely

Badarni Mohammed, Arab Children Friends Association

Pleasure for the Children

P.O. Box 46541, Haifa 31464, [ISRAEL]

Regional Networks

Africa

In Africa, representatives from a variety of countries are in the process of creating the Early Childhood Development Network for Africa (ECDNA). As a result of a meeting in South Africa in February 1995 a proposal for the formation of the organization, drafted in December 1994, was reviewed and changes made. The new proposal was then shared with donor agencies and the wider ECCD community within Africa. The proposal was further refined at a meeting in Uganda, August 18–22, 1995. The Uganda meeting resulted in a revised proposal presented at the Development for African Education (DAE) Meeting held October 16–21 in France. Included in the proposal was a recommendation that the ECDNA be recognized as a Working Group within the DAE. The proposal was presented by Margaret Kabiru and Barnabas Otaala from Africa. Kathy Bartlett (AKF), Cyril Dalais (UNICEF) and Nat Colletta (WB) were there providing support from the donor perspective. It is hoped that during 1996 the status of the proposal will be clear and funds will be made available to support the further development of the group.

South and Southeast Asia

Regional activities were also undertaken in Asia. The UNICEF Regional Offices in South Asia and South East Asia held a joint meeting on ECCD programming. (See Regional Profile by Sheldon Shaeffer on page 33). Participants attended from Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia, Viet Nam, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal. Save the Children USA (Carrie Auer) and the CG (Judith Evans) were also represented. From each country there was a UNICEF and Government and/or NGO representative at the meeting. The three days of meetings

UNICEF 94-1051 Betty Press

consisted of presentations of current ECCD programming in the country and plans for the future in relation to the further development of ECCD programmes. There was a wide range of experience among the countries in terms of ECCD programmes. For example, the Philippines has a well developed system of ECCD programmes and considerable experience in implementing a wide variety of programming strategies. Myanmar, on the other hand, is just beginning to develop ECCD programmes. Thus the sharing of country experience was extremely valuable.

Latin America

Leadership in bringing together organizations and individuals working in ECCD in the Latin American region has been taken by the Organization of American States. Robert Myers participated in the annual meeting in Costa Rica in September, presenting a paper and working with participants to frame a recommendation to be carried to the Conference of Ministers of Education later in the year.

International Organizations

CG Secretariat

Policy Study

During the past five years a number of countries have developed specific ECD policies, and there are others that are beginning the process. Before the process gets too far along it is useful to address the issue of policy and its relation to programme planning and implementation, and then to develop some guidelines for those who anticipate being involved in a policy-development process. The Secretariat is coordinating a policy project to do just that, with support from USAID and UNICEF. A first step was the publication of Issue 17 of the *Coordinators' Notebook* which focussed on policy issues. Enclosed with the issue was an appeal for countries to submit copies of current policy related to ECCD.

At the present time policies are being gathered. These will be analyzed and a paper produced describing what currently exists. In addition, there will be an in-depth review of several countries that have introduced new policies supportive of ECCD programming for young children and their families, to better understand the processes undertaken which led to policy changes. There will be a Working Group meeting in 1996 where the data will be shared. From this a manual/guidelines will be developed that can be used by governments interested in developing appropriate policy.

Gender Study

In recent years there has been considerable international interest in the plight of the girl child—particularly in terms of girls' participation in the formal education system. However, what has received less attention is the situation of the girl child prior to her entry into the formal system. What does the girl child bring with her as a foundation for learning and development? What is her overall health, her current nutritional status and her nutritional history? What type of psycho-social stimulation has she received and what type of socialization has she undergone? To what extent is this different from what happens for boys in the culture? These issues are being explored in a project that will look at the situation of young children in six countries, with a focus on understanding the ways in which current beliefs, values and practices affect gender development, and to identify plausible points of intervention. Organizations participating in the study include USAID, the Aga Khan Foundation, EDC, the IDB, and Save The Children/USA.

Countries are Indonesia, Bolivia, Morocco, India, Mali and Jamaica. Researchers were identified in each country. The researchers include: Dr. Seema Agarwal, India; Ms. Janet Brown, Jamaica; Ms. Jill McFarren Aviles and Mrs. Frida Leon, Bolivia/Peru; Dr. Ratna Megawangi, Indonesia; Dr. Aicha Belarbi, Morocco; and Dr. Urbain Dembele, Mali.

Between December 1995 and March 1996 the researchers are conducting a review of the literature in their country that focuses on gender development for children before the age of formal school. The results will be shared at a meeting in April 1996, where the researchers will also be provided with training in a participatory research technique in order to gather some first-hand data. The conduct of that research and the subsequent write-up will constitute the second half of the overall project, which is to be completed by the end of 1996.

The Consultative Group Home Page on the World Wide Web

One of the major accomplishments during 1995 was the development of a Home Page for international early childhood care and development on the World Wide Web. Between July 1995–February 1996, the Home Page was designed and put up on line. Its address is: http://www.ecdgroup.com. The goal of this project has been to:

- archive all the documents produced by the Consultative Group Secretariat over the past 13 years;
- make ECCD information available electronically for easier transfer and dissemination to professionals working in international donor agencies, international NGOs and academic settings;
- create an ECCD resource for students, teachers, political change agents, international development consultants and programme officers, and government decision makers. It reaches a new audience with the kinds of information ECCD professionals are trying to share with each other—in particular the 'next generation' of graduate students, teachers in training at Universities and others whose work includes the World Wide Web as a common source of information; and
- to prepare ECCD information for eventual access to people working on ECCD in developing countries. As the technology becomes more readily available in these countries, we hope to have information and structures ready to make it worth donors' investment to help their grantees gain access to the WWW. If there is enough useful information on-line, all stakeholders in ECCD are more likely to use the medium. As more people use it, it can enable greater collaboration, cross-geographical exchange of ideas, and greater South-South as well as North-South and South-North communication on what is happening for young children globally.

The first stage of the effort—to create a flexible outline to accommodate a wide variety of ECCD information, to set up an interactive 'conference room' and to archive all of the CG Secretariat's publications and put them 'on-line'—is nearly complete. (See the next issue of the *Notebook* for a copy of the Home Page outline.)

We are planning to make the documents in the Home Page available via e-mail and on floppy disks in the near future, to allow ECCD proponents who do not have access to the internet to take advantage of this new resource.

The Consultative Group on ECCD welcomes a new participating organization

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

With the approval of increased resources for the institution in 1994, the Governors of the Inter-American Development Bank chose *poverty reduction and social equity* as one of the major areas of focus for the Bank's future work. A main lever for poverty reduction and social equity over the long haul is increased investment in human resources through the provision of better health, nutrition, education, and related basic services that target the poor, especially their children. The conjunction of the IDB's emphasis on poverty reduction through human resource investment, and a growing awareness among the IDB's clients that early childhood care and development interventions are a crucial part of this strategy has led to increased IDB involvement in ECCD activities since the early 1990s.

To support the formulation of a Bank strategy for this sector, the Women in Development Unit (SDS/WID) in 1995 sponsored the preparation of a paper that reviews Latin American and Caribbean program experiences with different types of models and services for attending to early child care and development needs, and the implications of these experiences for future IDB policy and action. To support operational staff in the development of ECCD projects and components, the Social Programs Division (SDS/SOC) is currently overseeing the preparation of a Resource Book on ECCD which provides information and guidance for the identification, design and preparation of projects.

To further support project development in this area, the World Bank and the IDB are co-sponsoring a technical workshop on the costs and financing of ECCD activities, scheduled for June 10–11, 1996. The objectives are to examine methods for evaluating costs, to review comparative cost data on Latin American and Caribbean ECCD programs,

and to prepare and review case studies of the cost and financing of programs in specific countries. The expectation is that the papers and discussion generated by the conference will clarify unsettled issues on these topics and provide material to disseminate among specialists in the field and for training in cost analysis of ECCD projects.

Most of the IDB's initial activities in this area are centered around child care components within a variety of types of operations that responded to the need to support working mothers and their families. Several Bank-financed projects currently in execution which include ECCD components are:

- the Rio de Janeiro Favelas Upgrading project, which focuses its community involvement strategy on the development of day care centers to support working women;
- the Bolivia Regional Development and Sanitation project, which includes the provision of child care facilities in the municipal markets;
- a technical cooperation project in Paraguay to promote women's participation in development which finances the formation of community day care centers;
- the Mexico Primary Education Program, which has an Initial Education component directed to parents; and
- a pre-school child care and nutrition component within the Colombia Red de Solidaridad project.

In the IDB's pipeline of projects under preparation, there are projects which focus entirely on providing ECCD services to children and their families, which include the Nicaragua Early Childhood Care and Development Program, the Bolivia Early Childhood Development in Rural Areas Program, and the Ecuador At-Risk Child and Youth Development Program. Several other projects in the pipeline incorporate ECCD activities within more broadly defined community development/poverty reduction strategies. These include the Argentina Vulnerable Groups Program and the Ceará (Brazil) Support to Social Reform Program.

The IDB is also financing, on a grant basis, technical cooperation projects for children in especially difficult circumstances. Several of these projects include day care centers and pre-schools for children from families in extreme poverty, and some include specialized attention for single teen-age mothers and their children. Technical cooperation projects are in execution in Argentina, Brazil, Central America, the Andean Region, and in preparation in Mexico, Paraguay and Venezuela.

The following IDB staff are involved in ECCD-related work and may be contacted for additional information:

NAME	MAIN AREA OF INVOLVEMENT	PHONE & E-MAIL
Alvaro Cubillos	Project Development Southern Cone	(202) 623-1592 alvaroc@iadb.org
Stephen Doherty	Project Development Central America & Non-English Speaking Caribbean	(202) 623-1369 stephend@iadb.org
Michelle Fryer	Project Development English-Speaking Caribbean & Andean Region	(202) 623-2672 michellef@iadb.org
Sarah Howden	Project Development Southern Cone	(202) 623-2079 sarahh@iadb.org
Heraldo Laguzzi	Project Development English-Speaking Caribbean & Andean Region	(202) 623-1264 heraldol@iadb.org
Marta Mejia	Project Development Central America & Non-English Speaking Caribbean	(202) 623-1794 martam@iadb.org
Ricardo Morán	Research, Policy, Project Support Region-wide	(202) 623-2495 ricardomo@iadb.org
Charles Richter	Project Development Central America & Non-English Speaking Caribbean	(202) 623-2432 charlesr@iadb.org
Gabriela Vega	Women in Development, Policy, Project Support Region-wide	(202) 623-1599 gabrielave@iadb.org

Address: Inter-American Development Bank, 1300 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20577

UNICEF

The 1995-96 Plan of Action of the Education Cluster of UNICEF describes Early Childhood Development (ECD) as a major supportive strategy for quality learning and Universal Primary Education. It sets out as its main objective the implementation of several lines of action aimed at:

1. improving policy development in favor of ECD as part of the Basic Education at several levels including institutional, regional, and national;

2. accelerating capacity building mainly

through training of staff at both administrative/ managerial, and at the project execution/grass-roots levels;

3. reinforcing partnerships at the local level with parents and communities and among the donor community;

4. promoting research to identify better monitoring and evaluation procedures, and aimed at improving child status (health, nutrition, stimulation) as the child moves from home to other learning sites (conventional or non-formal).

Meeting the challenge. We are pleased to report that at the last count, August 1995, 91 countries are addressing young child development as an important feature of their educational programmes. UNICEF is not working by itself in collaborating with Governments. Twenty two agencies—multilateral, bi-lateral, NGOs, PVOs, and private foundations concerned with young child development—are active in the field. They are reviewing, developing and supporting ECD programmes aimed at better parenting, and at providing a better level of integrated services: home-based, community-based, and in a few cases institution-based (helping mothers at work). We spent a total of 93 days reviewing programmes in the field, attending training and orientation courses, and addressing various fora to promote Basic Education Strategies within ECD and Adult Education as two major supportive strategies.

A basic education strategy for ECD. UNICEF's Strategies in Basic Education (E/ICEF/1995/16) adopted by the Executive Board in May 1995 acknowledges that learning begins at birth and continues through the life of an individual. It states that a stimulating and caring environment is an essential foundation for education and it recommends that parents and caregivers need to have knowledge and skills to promote and protect the normal growth and development of the young child. It agrees that support should be directed to improving the skills and capacities of parents and caregivers and to community- and family-based activities with attention paid to cost-effectiveness and programme sustainability. This statement now supports the work already undertaken some two years back aimed at developing a policy on ECD. It will also enable country offices to re-focus their programme strategies and ensure that more human, material and financial resources are allocated to the sector of Basic Education of which ECD is an integral, essential part.

Most of the programmes are moving from their focus on provision of equipment to pre-school institutions to developing ways of targeting parents, providing knowledge, skills and know-how to help their children themselves. UNICEF's programmes are also working on community partnerships and on providing support to enable parents to assume fully their parenting responsibilities.

Need for policy dialogue and advocacy. UNICEF still intends to maintain the on-going dialogue on policy development and advocacy with national and local governments, with our partners at country level and with donors to ensure that the holistic, integrated approaches to young child development with active parental and community participation is fully understood and developed. It is estimated that by early 1996, most of the 91 Country Offices that are making ECD programmes an important feature of their Basic Education Strategies will have incorporated the essentials of the Policy update. Training and orientation courses offered in 1996–97 will enable them to move further with development of activities that will aim at improving learning capacities of young children, empowering parents and mobilizing community partnership, and developing better monitoring and evaluation procedures for their programmes.

UNICEF/94-0731/Emily Booker

World Bank

Joint HDD and EDI Early Child Development Educational Sequence

The World Bank's Human Development Department (HDD) and the Economic Development Institute's (EDI) Human Resources Division are pleased to announce a ten-day sequence of Early Child Development educational events. This Early Child Development (ECD) educational sequence consists of the following events:

Part I. Two ECD conferences at the Carter Presidential Center in Atlanta, Georgia (April 8-12, 1996): HDD's Conference titled *Early Child Development: Investing in the Future* **(April 8–9, 1996).** HDD invited one hundred guests to participate in its conference. The conference will focus on *state of the art* ECD practices. Participants will exchange knowledge with leading experts in the field while examining the importance of investing in human capital formation through early childhood programs.

The following issues will be examined:

- **Current scientific knowledge of the needs of young children.** The long-term synergistic effects of nutrition, health, stimulation, and early education on a child's ability to thrive, learn, perform well in school, and become a productive adult in the work force.
- **Objectives and programming options of early childhood initiatives.** The elements of quality early childhood programs and the implementation lessons learned from existing programs in developing countries.
- **The impact of early childhood programs.** The research on outcomes, costs, financing, and economic benefits.
- **Policy implications.** The role of government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector.

A brochure with the abstracts of the papers presented at the conference for discussion will be prepared prior to the conference and distributed to all the participants.

The Task Force for Child Survival and Development's Conference titled *Children First: A Global Forum.* **(April 10–12, 1996).** The Task Force will host a forum on global achievements in the field of health and social development. The invitational forum will include representatives from the six regions of the world, who exemplify best practices and models of excellence that have improved child physical and mental health, education and social development. The following themes will be explored:

- Social Development of Children: the resources available, what works, the cost-effectiveness, sustainability and factors that make programs replicable.
- The Widening Technological Gap Between the 'Haves' and the 'Have-nots': how to transfer the economic resources.
- The Evolution From Child Survival to Child Development: the identification of cross-culturally appropriate, developmental milestones for a child's well-being, objectives that are 'doable.'

The Forum will be a time for participants to:

–Share knowledge about what works;

–Develop strategies for improving access to services;

–Reach consensus on a set of specific goals that will improve the health, education and well-being of children by the year 2000.

Part II. Follow-up ECD Workshop at EDI, Washington, D.C. (April 15–17, 1996).

In order to maximize the potential outcomes resulting from the delegates participating in the two ECD conferences, EDI will host a follow-up workshop in Washington, D.C. immediately following the ECD conferences in Atlanta. Participants in the workshop will be encouraged to utilize their acquired or enhanced knowledge, understanding and enthusiasm in the ECD domain, to study, develop policy, and design outreach, training events, and activities in their respective countries.

An important component of the ten-day ECD educational sequence is the set of educational products the participants will receive from the World Bank. First, participants will receive HDD's publication *Strategies for the Development of Young Children.* At the HDD conference, participants will be given a conference brochure with printed abstracts of submitted conference work-

ing papers. After the conference, the Bank will publish and distribute a Conference Proceedings. In addition, HDD and EDI will produce a set of (edited) videotapes of the sessions and presentations of both the HDD conference and EDI's follow-up workshop. Finally, a CD-ROM with ECD reference information will be made available. These materials will support ECD training and information needs worldwide.

Christian Children's Fund

In Fiscal Year 1994/95, 19 of the Latin America, Africa and Asia National CCF Offices conducted a baseline survey using five standardized health, nutrition and education indicators (for description see issue 17 of the *Coordinators' Notebook*, Network Notes).

The findings suggest, though, that some interventions may be more effective than others in attaining desired outcomes.

What Next?

CCF identified a group of programs that have been documented and show promise as models that promote the overall development of children. These are:

- Parenting Skills Training Program—Ecuador
- Maternal-Child Training Program—Honduras
- Community-Based Education—Senegal
- Psycho-Social Needs of Children—Angola
- Universalization of Primary School Education—New Delhi, India

While each of these programs addresses the overall development of children, each is designed for a particular set of communities within a particular cultural setting. Furthermore, each focuses on a defined age group of children, and, while overlap exists, each emphasizes different aspects of overall development. For example, part of the Honduras program focuses on health and supporting the accomplishment of developmental milestones during the first three years of life. Meanwhile, part of the Senegal program focuses on the quality of the primary school-aged child's learning experience in the existing formal education system. In other words, each program individually might be addressing some part of a child's development, focusing on a specific area and age range. Collectively, though, if these pieces are put together, these programs could well represent a comprehensive programming approach.

In March, 1996, CCF brought together individuals representing the collective experience of these different programs at a two-week long workshop, with the goal of articulating the components of this comprehensive approach, and identifying core design and evaluation elements that might be applied in any programming environment.

Goal for Fiscal Year 95/96

1. To identify program measurement indicators for assessing child development needs and program outcomes, based on the program designs and collective experience of the 5 models. These indicators will be integrated into the Annual Impact Monitoring and Evaluation System (AIMES), or function as optional items as appropriate.

2. To develop a programming instrument that enables one to assess program strengths and gaps when addressing holistic child development outcomes of specific programs. This instrument or decision tree would help program personnel in their efforts to design, evaluate, or otherwise assess the comprehensiveness of a program intervention vis a vis the needs of a community.

The Bernard van Leer Foundation

The Environment of the Child Conference

As a conclusion to a project on the Environment of the Child undertaken by the Bernard van Leer Foundation over the last three years, a conference was held at the Foundation Headquarters in the Hague from 10–12 December 1995. The project was described by Dr. Horaçio Walker, the coordinator, as focusing on the question: "What are the elements in a good environment for young children?" To find answers to this question, the project had examined research findings, held workshops and conducted case-studies in four countries, Kenya, France, Venezuela and India. The project also had an internal goal, in that it sought to respond to the needs of the Foundation itself and those of its projects, to have research evidence on which to build the development of their programmes.

At the Conference in December, the 14

participants, representing the case-study countries and a number of interested international organisations, discussed papers on each of the case-studies and a draft report on the project produced and presented by Dr. Martin Woodhead of the Open University in the UK. The papers roused lively discussion on the interface of theory and practice in ECD, the role of culture in ECD programmes, the importance in programme development of being implicit about our value judgements and the question of Foundation decisions about resource allocation as ECD inevitably spills over into areas of adult education and support, and community development, etc.

Readers can obtain the introductory paper of the project, "The Environment of the Child", written by Terezinha Nunes, from the Bernard van Leer Foundation free of charge. The paper by Martin Woodhead, "In Search of a Rainbow" will be available from the Foundation later this year.

Ruth Cohen
Publications, Bernard van Leer Foundation
P.O. Box 82334, 2508 EH, The Hague, Netherlands
Tel: (31-70) 351-2040,
Fax: (31-70) 350-2373

Update on the Joint Training Initiative

This three-year Initiative is now past its half-way point and is going from strength to strength. After the first training course for 25 core trainers from eleven African countries held in Johannesburg in February 1995, the participants returned to their countries and most of them carried out at least one training course for national trainers during the year that followed. The message that training does not take place in a vacuum seems to have been taken on board by all the participants, with the result that most of them have been catalysts in the process of developing a coherent ECD policy in their countries. All of them have made contacts with organisations involved in ECD and with the help of local UNICEF offices have set up ECD Task Forces.

As far as training is concerned, visits by members of the coordinating team to all of the countries have found that the experiential participatory training methods, advocated by the Initiative, have been fully internalised by the core trainers and have been received enthusiastically by the national trainers.

The training pack, *Enhancing the Skills of Early Childhood Trainers*, published jointly by the Bernard van Leer Foundation and UNESCO, has proved a very useful basic text for the Initiative. During this year a manual produced by the Initiative, and based on the training course in Johannesburg and the subsequent course in Harare, will be available. The Training Pack and the draft copies of the manual have already been translated into local languages by some of the core trainers. The latter have also produced their own training manuals based on their local training experiences. Several of the core trainers are working with UNICEF offices to produce simple parent materials which can be used by illiterate parents.

A number of instruments have also been developed as part of the Initiative: several evaluation questionnaires, guidelines for support visits, and a guide for reporting on training events.

In February of this year the second training course for the same group of core trainers took place in Harare. The main focus of this second training was: the sharing of experiences since the Johannesburg training; analysis of the practice undertaken, i.e. training of national trainers and influencing of national ECD policy, in order to identify gaps in skills and content and strengths and weaknesses; and the inclusion of new content areas which had been identified by participants and the coordinating team during in situ support visits. The outcomes of the training course will be incorporated in the manual referred to above.

During the Harare training a local Media Trust was commissioned to videotape one of the five days of the course. The results will be edited to provide a video which will introduce the Training Initiative and illustrate experiential participatory learning in practice.

Finally, the Training Initiative is looking at ways its work can be extended to other African Countries, since demands for this to happen are increasing all the time.

UNESCO

Main highlights of UNESCO's planned actions for the coming year include:

Early Childhood Education

To assist Member States in order to increase access to Early Childhood Education, to create programmes linking the home, early childhood and primary school environments, to generate appropriate materials, UNESCO will, among other things:

- prepare for the 29th Session of the General Conference in 1997, a substantive report on family and early childhood education in the different regions of the world with practical recommendations and orientations on the strategies to be adopted by UNESCO and its Member States in these fields. To prepare this report, UNESCO will hold several regional consultations to collect information on the situation of early childhood and family education.
- hold a European Seminar on "Educating the Young Child in Europe" at UNESCO on the 24–26 October 1996, organized by the European Section of the World Organization for Early Childhood Education (OMEP) and sponsored by UNESCO.

Educating for the Convention on the Rights of the Child

To plan and implement programmes to ensure that the Convention on the Rights of the Child is reflected in access to education, school legislation, management, curricula, teaching processes and the quality of child participation, UNESCO will, among other things:

- Review the Initial Reports submitted to the UN Committee on Rights of the Child in terms of the situation of children in education, culture and communication, and address issues under the following topics: general situation of public education; access to education; quality of education; cultural and leisure activities for children; communication and information.
- Plan training programmes and modules for Ministry of Education officials, teachers and professionals working with children.
- Support distance education programmes for UNESCO National Commissions, UNESCO Clubs and teacher unions.
- Develop prototype teaching materials on children's rights, the publication of teacher manuals and children's versions of the Convention.
- Create university chairs in Children's Rights—four are currently being created in China—and support university summer courses in children's rights.
- Launch an initiative in the Sahel countries on the Protection and Education of Girls.

Training of Early Childhood Personnel

To improve the quality and outreach of Early Childhood programmes, UNESCO will provide support for the training of early childhood and family education trainers, and support regional Early Childhood Cooperating Centres, in particular the activities of the Averroes Foundation. UNESCO will, among other things:

- Seek to translate the Enhancing the Skills of Early Childhood Trainers training pack into other languages (French, Portuguese) to increase the outreach of this training method.
- Build national capacity to train Early Childhood and family education trainers, in particular in African LDCs, the Sahel and Eastern Europe.
- Prepare with the HCEMEA, the Ministry of Social Affairs of Burkina Faso, UNICEF and other partners, a Regional Seminar on Early Childhood in Francophone Africa on early childhood services, policies and practices to be held in Ouagadougou in October 1996, and bring together some 50 early childhood professionals from 15 Francophone African countries.
- Launch the activities of an Early Childhood regional Centre in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) for Francophone Africa.
- Help create and launch a network of early childhood professionals in Francophone Africa, that will be part of the Early Childhood Development Network for Africa.

Early Childhood Information and Documentation

To challenge decisionmakers with knowledge from research and experience, offer

them an outlook on different strategies and approaches to early childhood programmes and issues, and give a voice to the needs of young children. UNESCO will provide information support to those responsible for early childhood activities. Actions will be undertaken to:

- Collect, monitor and disseminate information on the status of young children and their early learning environments, focussing on home-school links, school readiness, parent education and home-based activities.
- Facilitate access to electronic networking and information exchange, such as through the *Children's House in Cyberspace* Initiative.
- Strengthen national resources and capacities needed for proper information on young children through advice and training on methods for collection, analysis and dissemination of early childhood information, through, in particular, support for the *Early Childhood Development Network for Africa*.
- Develop links between decision-makers, researchers and practitioners, by carrying out national inventories of early childhood resources to determine 'who is doing what' and the role they can play in enhancing early childhood partnerships and advocacy.

UNICEF/93-BOU0500/Cindy Andrew

Education Development Center (EDC)

EDC conducted a three-month Technical Assistance project (January–April, 1996) to help the government of the Philippines assess its sector review of Early Childhood Development and to assist in preparing the design and implementation of a national ECD program. Funded by the Asian Development Bank, a team of eight consultants who are experts in health, child development, economic planning, nutrition, and program planning reviewed the government's draft ECD program, worked to refine the recommendations in consultation with national and local officials, helped to evaluate and refine key program components including child health, protein energy and micronutrient deficiency control and early education interventions, as well as management and financing strategies which bear on program sustainability.

One of the outcomes of the project was a detailed implementation plan, which included a management system for integrated ECD service delivery, a policy framework for the organization, management, and evaluation of the project, and recommendations to the government on costs and financing of the ECD program. For more information, contact:

Andrea Bosch, EDC
1250 24th St. N.W., Washington, DC 20037
Tel: (202) 466-0540, Fax: (202) 223-4059

High/Scope Educational Research Foundation

The High/Scope Educational Research Foundation has agreed to serve as a Head Start Quality Research Center, with anticipated federal funding of $2.4 million over five years, joining with three other new research centers—at Georgia State University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the Education Development Center in Massachusetts—this center will help the U.S. Administration on Children, Youth and Families define and assess the effectiveness of high-quality practices in Head Start programs. Begun in 1965, Head Start is the largest federal preschool program for young children living in low-income families, currently serving 752,000 preschoolers at an annual cost of $3.5 billion.

Research Center Director Lawrence Schweinhart noted, "This $10 million federal initiative is just what Head Start needs at this time to resolve any doubts about its quality and enter the 21st Century ready to reach its full potential." The High/Scope Foundation's Perry Preschool study found that programs like Head Start, when they are of high quality, provide taxpayers a return of $7.16 for every dollar spent, cut in half participants' later crime rates, and decrease their need for special education and social services. Adds High/Scope Foundation President David Weikart, "This study challenges Head Start to provide programs at levels of quality that are sufficient to achieve similar results."

Together with the other three centers, High/Scope's new research center will examine the importance of various aspects of Head Start, such as staff qualifications, organizational climate, program activities, parent involvement, and the caseloads of health care and social services

providers. This research will refine the measurement of program quality and examine program effects on children and families. Center staff will consult with Head Start program staff, parents, and other community members to identify issues and problems for the research to address and will assist program staff in monitoring and improving the quality of the programs.

Contact:
Center Director Lawrence Schweinhart
600 North River Street,
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198-2898
Tel: (313) 485-2000;
Fax: (313) 485-0704

Childwatch

Since the last report from Childwatch they have developed an internet data base where it is possible to find information about Childwatch and its projects.

Childwatch is also developing the prototype for the *Children's House in Cyberspace*. Children's House is a Childwatch initiative with the purpose of creating a meeting point for all professionals working with children at the Internet. The address is: http://childhouse.uio.no

Also involved in the project are UNICEF, UNESCO, the International Save the Children Alliance, the Consultative Group, World Bank and others. If you have comments or suggestions for the Children's House, contact Childwatch. Also if you have documents or databases that you think might be of interest to others, contact Childwatch and discuss with them the possibility of adding them. Childwatch is also interested in creating links to other Internet data bases, so if you have found Internet data bases of common interest, send Childwatch the Internet address and they will consider linking it to the Children's House.

Save the Children

Save the Children was recently awarded core funding for phase two of the agency's "Strong Beginnings" education program. Strong Beginnings brings together three main areas: (a) early childhood development, (b) primary education, and (c) women's literacy in a mutually-reinforcing cycle of lifelong and intergenerational learning. Strong Beginnings is operational in 15 countries in Africa, Asia, the Balkans, and the Americas.

Strong Beginnings has considerable expertise training trainers, building local capacity, and working through partnerships. It is a key trainer in the Africa ECD Training Initiative with UNICEF and Bernard van Leer Foundation.

Strong Beginnings projects focused on Early Childhood Development are being implemented in eleven countries (Bangladesh, Bolivia, Bosnia and Croatia, El Salvador, Egypt, Jordan, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand, USA). The program's new parent and caregiver training program, Strong Beginnings for Parents (a joint project with UNICEF), was recently inaugurated and in the first instance is being pilot tested in the USA. In the USA, Strong Beginnings works in partnership with Columbia University in New York City, enriching the local Head Start model, and in the Navajo Nation works to improve the developmental quality of child care programs. In the Philippines, the program both strengthens the quality of community-based child care programs with local and national NGOs, and supports working parents through its workplace child care program in Metro Manila. The program in Thailand has served as a pilot for the emerging national program of community-based ECD serving rural communities. In Nepal pioneering work occurred among women's literacy and production groups, adding a distinctive child care component. In the Balkans, the program has supported children and families in war-torn areas of Croatia and Bosnia, organizing community groups around young children in the provision of ECD facilities, thus improving child care and community morale. In El Salvador, involvement with the World Bank's EDUCO program for the reform and revitalisation of basic education has led to the inclusion of early childhood components within locally managed basic education facilities.

Meetings in 1995

International Forum for Child Welfare (IFCW) World Forum

Costa Rica, September, 1995

The Consultative Group was represented at the 1995 World Forum meeting in Costa Rica by Marta Arango of CINDE. Following the meeting we received the following note from Milena Grillo from the Fundacion Paniamor, who organized the conference. "Your colleagues, Marta Arango and Alejandro Acosta of CINDE did a marvelous job of organizing an informative and stimulating session. The delegates who participated in their Symposium relayed positive comments about its program and content. . . You will be pleased to know that Early Childhood Care and Education was identified as a priority area by participants at the FORUM and by the Executive Committee of IFCW."

Donors for African Education (DAE) Meeting

Tours, France, October 18–22, 1995

Kathy Bartlett (AKF) and Barnabas Otaala (CG Field Representative, Namibia) have been actively involved in developing an Early Childhood Working Group within the DAE. Several meetings were held in 1995 to develop the concept of a regional ECCD group for Africa. Activities culminated in a presentation of the concept at the annual DAE meeting.

International Children's Day of Broadcasting

December 10, 1995

Hillary Clinton and Dr. T. Berry Brazelton were featured in a UNICEF production, *Growing and Changing*. The program was produced for the 1995 International Children's Day of Broadcasting (ICDB), which took place on 10 December 1995. This year's ICDB was used to launch UNICEF's 50th Anniversary celebrations. The materials for the broadcast were derived from the videos being produced by UNICEF that were developed by Cassie Landers.

UNICEF 90-014/M Peru

Meetings in 1996

First Iberoamerican Symposium on Educational Research

Havana Cuba, February, 1996

The First Iberoamerican Symposium on Education and Research was held in Havana, Cuba from the 6th to 9th of February. The Symposium, organized by the Instituto Central de Ciencias Pedagogicas (Central Institute for the Pedagogical Sciences) was attended by approximately 100 researchers and practitioners from Cuba and 6 other Latin American countries, featured research work presented and discussed in seven commissions dealing, respectively, with:

1. Development of intelligence and creativity in children and youth.
2. Preschool education as an avenue for developing happy and intelligent children.
3. Family-school-community: the triangular base for education and development.
4. The teacher: principal actor or just one more member of the educational team?
5. Pedagogy in the contemporary world.
6. Directions in the process of teaching and learning.
7. Research and educational quality.

Brief summaries of the research presented and the results of the discussions are available.

The Symposium also featured special presentations dealing with: Pedagogy as a Science, Child Development in the Twenty-First Century, The Identification and Development of Talent, and A Longitudinal Study of the Cuban Child. In addition, panels dealt with The Role of Education and Research in Social Transformation and A Project for the Development of Intelligence, Talent and Creativity.

Because it is so unusual, the longitudinal study presented deserves special comment. This study began with the collection of base-line data on a cohort of children born live throughout all of Cuba during the first week of March in 1973. These 4299 children have been followed up at 7 months and 7, 11, and 17 years of age. Even at age 17, 70% of the original sample was located. The information collected not only provides an extraordinary basis for insights into the development of a cohort of Cuban children, but also allows one to examine broader changes in the Cuban society from 1973 onward.

The address is
Instituto Central de Ciencias
Pedagogicas
Obispo 160, Havana 1, Cuba
Tel: (53-7) 62-7605, Fax: (53-7) 62-2547

At press time, the following two conferences had not yet taken place. We will report on them in Issue 19 of the CN.

Early Childhood Development Programs-Investing in the Future

Atlanta, Georgia, World Bank, April 8–9, 1996.
See description p. 57.

The Task Force for Child Survival and Development. Children First: A Global Forum

Atlanta, Georgia, April 9–12, 1996.
See description p. 57.

UNICEF/93-1698/Roger Lemoyne

Publications and Videos

Our Day-care Centers Respect Children: Quality Criteria for Day Care

MARIA MALTA CAMPOS AND FULVIA ROSEMBERG. FUNDAÇAO CARLOS CHAGAS. SAO PAULO, BRAZIL. 1995

The introduction to this useful document states: "This document is composed of two parts. The first contains principles for the organization and internal operation of day-care centers, for actual practice in direct contact with children. The second sets out principles for setting up policy norms and guidelines, programs and funding systems for day-care centers, whether they are government-run or not. The details and technical specifications required to set up programs are not to be found here. The principles were written as positive statements, as affirmations of commitment by politicians, administrators and teachers to quality service in any day-care center that is oriented to the basic needs of children. They can be used as guidelines for initial establishment and evaluation of day-care centers or as a declaration of responsibility. ... It seems to us, right now, that the most urgent objective is to attain minimum quality standards, in a practical and objective way, respecting the dignity and basic rights of children in institutions where they spend a large part of their childhood."

The principles for a day-care center that are elaborated are: "Our children have a right to:

–play
–individual attention
–a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment
–contact with nature
–health and hygiene
–a healthy diet
–develop their curiosity, imagination and capacity for self-expression
–move in large spaces
–protection, affection and friendship
–express their feelings
–special attention during the period of adaptation to the day-care center
–develop their cultural, racial and religious identity."

The document is available in English and Portuguese from:
Fundaçao Carlos Chagas
Av. Prof. Francisco Morato 1565
1565 Sao Paulo, Brazil 05513-900
Fax: (55-11) 815-1059. E-mail: mmc@dpe001.fcc.ansp.br
A Spanish translation is forthcoming.

Early Child Development: Investing in the Future

MARY EMING YOUNG. WASHINGTON, D.C.: THE WORLD BANK, 1996

This 100-page publication from the World Bank is divided in two equal parts dealing, respectively, with the theory and practice of providing programs of integrated attention to young children. Like a number of other publications of this genre, this one also begins with a rationale for investing in Early Child Development (ECD) and sets out complementary program approaches. A useful section titled, "designing a program" deals briefly with: targeting, involving parents and communities, defining a curriculum, selecting and training staff, assessing children's progress and assessing a program's success. Some attention is given also to determining the cost of ECD programs and to different forms of financing. All of this is in the Theory section of the publication which is liberally sprinkled throughout with concrete illustrations of points made.

The Practice section provides one or two page descriptions of 19 different ECD projects, grouped as follows: Educating Parents, Training Caregivers, Reforming Formal Education Systems to Include Preschoolers, Educating through Mass Media.

This publication can be obtained from:
World Bank
1818 H Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20433, USA
Fax: (202) 477-6391. E-mail: books@worldbank.org

Early Childhood Care and Development (0-6 years): Trainers' Manual.
CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S FUND, NATIONAL OFFICE, BANGALORE, INDIA. 176 pp.

The purpose of this practical manual is to assist training of project staff, social workers, pre-school supervisors, para-professionals and parents in caregiving skills within the particular culture and context of South India. Translation of the manual into regional languages (the original is in English) is planned and a handbook for parents is also in the works. Each chapter of the manual provides a set of key messages, accompanied by explanations, suggestions and tips for good care. In some cases, warning signs or other assessment indicators are included. A chapter concludes with a set of questions to help check understanding of the information provided in the chapter. The topics treated in the Manual are:

Responsible Parenthood: Development of Values in the Child
Physical Development: Common Childhood Physical Illnesses
Social Development: Common Childhood Mental Illnesses
Socialization through Play: Environmental Factors
Intellectual and Cognitive Development: Environmental Factors
Early Childhood Education: Role of the Community
Emotional/Psychological Development: Developmental Rhythm
Family Life Education: Rights of the Child

Information about the manual and the South India program of CCF can be obtained from: Christian Children's Fund
P.O. Box 5054, 22 Museum Road
Bangalore-56001, Karnataka, India
Fax: (91-080) 559-4271

A Guide to Promoting Resilience in Children
EDITH GROTBERG.
THE HAGUE: BERNARD VAN LEER FOUNDATION, 1995.
PRACTICE AND REFLECTION NO. 8. ISBN 90-6195-038-4

The announcement states, "Resilience is a universal capacity which allows a person, group or community to prevent, minimize or overcome the damaging effects of adversity. Results from 14 countries that participated in the International Resilience Project show that fewer than half of the adults caring for children promote resilience in them. This Guide, based on the findings, will help individuals and programs to incorporate the promotion of resilience into their work with children."

Single copies of the publication are available free of charge to interested individuals and organizations. A small charge is made for multiple copies to cover costs of printing and postage. For more information about this publication, contact the Publications Section, Bernard van Leer Foundation, P.O. Box 82334, 2508 EH The Hague, The Netherlands. Fax: (31-70) 350-2373.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Developmentally Appropriate Outdoor Play Environments for Infants and Toddlers

JANE JOLLEY, "WORKING PAPERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT" NUMBER 15. BERNARD VAN LEER FOUNDATION, THE HAGUE. 1995

This brief guide starts by stressing the need for safe and stimulating outdoor environments for all children making the point that this is a neglected yet vitally important area. It goes on to consider children's different development levels, the needs that arise from these and the ways in which outdoor play facilities can respond to them.

We Are Your Children: the Kushanda early childhood education and care dissemination programme, Zimbabwe

SALLY BOOKER. BERNARD VAN LEER FOUNDATION, THE HAGUE. 1995

The Kushanda Project took its name from the Shona expression *Kushandisa zvinipo*, which means "what is there" or "to make what is there work"—a phrase that captures the Project's spirit of self reliance. It also underlines the fact that, for the children of Zimbabwe's rural majority early childhood services were only likely to become accessible if their parents learned how to use the material and human resources available in the immediate environment to make community-based preschools a reality.

All inquiries concerning this and other Foundation publications should be sent to:

Communications Section
Bernard van Leer Foundation
PO Box 82334
2508 EH The Hague, The Netherlands
Fax: (31-70) 350-2373

From UNESCO's Education Sector

An Evaluation Study of Parent Schools in China

MA BAOLIAN AND GUO XIAOPING. CHINA NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH. MONOGRAPH NO 2. 1995

Nourish and Nurture: World Food Programme Assistance for Early Childhood Education in India's Integrated Child Development Services

IRAM SIRAJ-BLATCHFORD. UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK, UNITED KINGDOM. MONOGRAPH NO. 3. 1995

Early Childhood Care and Education: Basic Indicators on Young Children

A POSTER SUMMARIZING KEY DATA ON YOUNG CHILDREN WORLD-WIDE

Families and Education

JOHN BENNETT. YCT UNESCO. OCCASIONAL PAPERS SERIES. NO. 18. 1995

This monograph offers a definition and discussion of family education, including parent education and family life education, and discusses ways to plan for family education in changing world contexts.

For information on these publications, please contact:
The Young Child and the Family Environment Project
UNESCO
7 Place Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP
France
Fax: (33-1) 40-65-94-05

UNICEF/92-0064/Roger LeMoyne

The promotion states, "When the population of Port Sudan leaped from 50,000 in 1956 to half a million in the 1980s, a small-scale enterprise program was initiated to aid the poorest residents in saving, expanding and making successful the small business that supported them and their families. The Port Sudan case study presented the stories of henna decorators, tailors, and tea sellers, and the strategies that enabled them to offer greater services to their growing community, and at the same time ensure their own livelihoods."

"The analysis of this and six other projects described in *SEEDS 2* illuminates various strategies aimed at increasing women's access to land, labor, and credit markets; providing child care, health care, and other support services; and organizing women for collective action and political participation."

"*SEEDS 2* also includes a study that documents UNICEF's efforts to institute child care programs in Ecuador, Ethiopia and Nepal, with emphasis on health and education. ...*SEEDS 2* puts into global perspective both the problems and successes of projects that promote women's economic self-sufficiency and political participation, making prominent the activities and priorities of grassroots women around the world."

The book is available for USD 9.00 plus postage. For a copy of the order form contact:

Feminist Press
311 East 49th St.
New York, New York 10128-5684
Tel: (212) 360-5794/ Fax (212) 348-1241

SEEDS 2: Supporting Women's Work Around the World
EDITED BY ANN LEONARD
THE FEMINIST PRESS
AUGUST 1995
ISBN 1-55861-106-1

Many readers will be familiar with the publications of AHRTAG (Appropriate Health Resources and Technologies Group). Child Health Dialogue is a new newsletter containing practical information on how to tackle the five main causes of child mortality: acute respiratory infections, diarrhoea, malaria, malnutrition and measles. This newsletter replaces two longstanding AHRTAG newsletters, Dialogue on Diarrhoea and ARI News. The first issue focusses on what health workers at first-level health facilities can do for very sick children.

NEWSLETTER
Child Health Dialogue
(quarterly from October 1995)
AHRTAG, 29-35
FARRINGTON ROAD, LONDON
EC1M 3JB, UK
FREE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Calendar

June 10-11, 1996

Costs and Financing of ECCD Programs
Carnegie Endowment for Peace, World Bank, Washington, D.C.

The main objective of this seminar is to examine the cost and finance of Early Childhood Development Programs, both from a conceptual and a practical perspective. In addition, the seminar should stimulate a continuous, systematic exchange of knowledge on this subject in Latin America and the Caribbean countries. For more information contact:
Myriam Waiser or Donald Winkler
World Bank
1818 H. St. N.W. Washington D.C. 20433
Tel: (202) 477-1234. Fax: (202) 477-6391

June 16–20, 1996

Education For All: Mid-decade Review
Amman, Jordan

As of press time, no agenda had been set for this meeting, which is a continuation in the series of EFA meetings aimed at promoting quality basic Education for All by the year 2000. For information on this meeting contact:
Frank Method, USAID
Tel: (703) 875-4221 email: fmethod@usaid.gov
or Kate Torkington, Bernard van Leer Foundation
Tel: (31-70) 351-2040. Fax: (31-70) 350-2373

July 2–5, 1996

Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media
Manila, Philippines

The idea for an Asian Summit was born during the World Summit on Children and Television held in March 1995. The Asian Summit is designed to "examine the role of the media in harnessing the support of every sector of society for the survival, development and growth of children in the context of their rights... The Summit seeks to bring together Ministers of Information and Education, top executives from national and private broadcasting networks, print and publishing media and the advertising industry, to renew their commitment towards safeguarding the rights of children... A parallel Children's Summit will be held to elicit the views of children on the media of today and tomorrow, and on how the mass media can serve their best interests, including those children with less access and means to new communication technologies." For more information contact:
Feny de los Angeles-Bautista
Tel: (632) 79-84-80 or 721-0987. Fax: (632) 785-5358

August 6–9, 1996

Young Children: Priorities and Challenges in the 21st Century
OMEP Thailand and the Faculty of Education
Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

OMEP Thailand, in collaboration with Chulalongkorn University is hosting an international conference on Young Children: Priorities and Challenges in the 21st Century. The objectives of the conferences are:

- to exchange experiences and opinions on problems in young children's development,
- to examine the current and urgent needs of young children in the Asia-Pacific region,
- to demonstrate mutual intentions for the safety and education of Asia-Pacific young children,
- to promote cooperation, collaboration and good understanding of early childhood professionals in the Asia-Pacific region.

There will be a pre-conference session on Constructivist Early Education. This will be held July 29–August 2nd. For more information about the conference contact:
Dr. Udomluck Kulapichitr
Department of Elementary Education, Faculty of Education
Chulalongkorn University
Phaya Thai Road, Bangkok, 10330
Tel: (662) 218-2600; Fax: (662) 218-2605

Calendar

September 5–8, 1996

Beyond Beijing
Association for Women in Development, Annual Meeting
Washington D.C.

The 1996 AWID Meeting takes as its theme progress toward implementation of the Platform for Action from the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. The Program Committee is seeking proposals from all regions of the world to meet the following goals:

- to provide an opportunity for participants to give status reports on progress toward implementation of the Platform of Action and the country commitments, and learn of progress worldwide;
- to share information about education and advocacy efforts that have been effective, and to learn from failures as well as successful activities;
- to urge practitioners, policymakers and academics to consider how they can be assisted by the perspective and approach of each other and to develop cross-disciplinary strategies when possible;
- to build skills in advocacy, fundraising, media, use of research data and other organization-building techniques;
- to strengthen collaborative relationships with other organizations—regional as well as sectoral—that share AWID's goals and principles.

For information contact:
Karen Mulhauser
AWID Forum Program Chair
Fax: (202) 463-0182, e-mail: awid@igc.apc.org

UNICEF/91-021/Jorgen Shytte

October, 1996

Regional ECCD Institute
Windhoek, Namibia

Alan Pence of the University of Victoria and Barnabas Otaala of the University of Namibia will be organizing a three-week Institute at the University of Namibia for ECD personnel in Eastern and Southern Africa, with support from UNICEF. This Institute is an off-shoot of the Institute held in Canada in 1995. The basic structure for the Institute is that it (1) has a limited enrollment of 20–23 individuals, who (2) are mid-career professionals in the field of ECCD, with (3) varied backgrounds in early childhood services, and who will benefit from (4) a highly interactive and participatory experience with similarly experienced professionals from other countries. The focus of the 1996 Regional Institute will be: *The Ecology of Child Care: International Case Studies and African Experiences*. Faculty for the Institute will include Margaret Kabiru, from Kenya and Tuntufye Mwamwenda from the University of the Transkei, and Judith Evans, in addition to Barnabas Otaala and Alan Pence. For further information contact:

Dr. Alan Pence
Professor, Unit for Child Care Research
School of Child and Youth Care
University of Victoria
P.O. Box 1700
Victoria, B.C. Canada V8W 2Y2
Tel: (604) 721-6357; Fax: (604) 721-8977

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Co-directors: Judith L. Evans
Robert G. Myers

Editor: Ellen M. Ilfeld

Design/Production: Maureen Scanlon
Susan Bergeron-West

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West Springfield, MA

For subscription information,
please contact Judith L. Evans,
6 The Lope, Haydenville, MA 01039 USA

THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT (CG) is an international interagency group dedicated to improving the condition of young children at risk. The CG grounds its work in a cross-disciplinary view of child care and development.

Launched in 1984, the CG has taken as its main purpose the fostering of communication among international donor agencies and their national counterparts, among decision-makers, funders, researchers, programme providers, parents and communities with the goal of strengthening programmes benefitting young children and their families.

The Consultative Group is administered and represented by its Secretariat. The Group includes a broad-based network of participating organisations and individuals who share a commitment to fostering the well-being and healthy development of young children. Administrative backstopping is provided by the High/Scope Foundation.

The *Coordinators' Notebook* is prepared by the Secretariat of the CG with support from the Aga Khan Foundation, the Bernard van Leer Foundation, InterAmerican Development Bank (IDB), Save the Children USA, UNICEF, UNESCO, USAID and the World Bank.

GOALS

TO INCREASE THE KNOWLEDGE BASE. The CG gathers, synthesizes and disseminates information on children's development, drawing from field experiences, traditional wisdom and scientific research.

TO SERVE AS A CATALYST. The CG works to increase awareness of issues affecting children, developing materials and strategies to help move communities, organisations and governments from rhetoric to practice, from policy to programming.

TO BUILD BRIDGES. The CG fosters networking among those with common concerns and interests, working across sectoral divisions, putting people in touch with the work of others by organising meetings, by disseminating information through publications, and by serving as a communications point.

TO SERVE AS A SOUNDING BOARD. The CG engages in dialogue with funders and decision-makers about developments in the field, providing the base for policy formulation, planning, programming and implementation.

Members of the Secretariat occasionally provide technical assistance to individual organisations in programme design, implementation and evaluation, and in the writing of technical papers and reports.

The *Coordinators' Notebook* is produced twice annually. It is one of our networking tools. Each issue focusses on a particular issue or topic, as well as offering network news. We try to provide information on the most appropriate research, field experience and practices to benefit individuals working with young children and their families. We encourage you to share this information with the other networks you take part in. Feel free to copy portions of this *Notebook* and disseminate the information to those who could benefit from it. Please let us know about any programmes or efforts benefitting young children and their families in which you may be involved.

For further information and to subscribe contact:

Dr. Judith L. Evans
6 The Lope
Haydenville, MA 01039 USA
Tel: (413) 268-7272 Fax: (413) 268-7279
e-mail: info@ecdgroup.com
world-wide web: http://www.ecdgroup.com

The Consultative Group can also be reached through:

Dr. Robert G. Myers
Insurgentes Sur 4411
Ed 25-304
Tlalcoligia
D.F. 14430, MEXICO
Tel/Fax (52-5) 573-0924
e-mail: rmyers@laneta.apc.org

CG Secretariat
UNICEF House, DH-40G
Three United Nations Plaza
New York, New York 10017
Tel: (212) 702-7233
Fax: (212) 702-7149